■ Saturday Special
Zhang Ziyi stars in seven new films

■ Metro
7 suspected robbers dead in Laguna shootout

■ Super
Gretchen Barretto tells all about her feud with Imelda Cojuangco

■ World / A11
Pope to beatify Mel Gibson's mystic muse

■ News / A2
Bishop links 4 top national officials to jueteng

■ Business / B1
Economic investments surge 99% to P30.4B

Popular anti-arthritis drug withdrawn due to health risks

NEW YORK—US pharmaceutical giant Merck announced a global withdrawal Thursday of its blockbuster arthritis drug Vioxx, narrowly taken by close to 2 million people worldwide, after a study showed it doubled patients' risk of heart attack and stroke.

Vioxx posted sales of $2.5 billion last year and has been widely marketed as a safe alter-

PHILIPPINE DAILY

INQUIRER

BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

Senators scold clueless cops over cell phone thefts

By Christine O. Avendaño

POLICE senators put a scolding here lawmakers for their lack of information and meager yet conflicting statistics on cell phone theft.

At the first hearing of the Senate committee on illegal drugs and public order on the issue, police officials were asked how they could

Saturday, October 2, 2004 • 24 pages / vol. 19 / no. 291

website: www.inq7.net

DOJ rules out amnesty

Bush gives RP special mention on terror fight

By Juliet Labog-Javellana and Christine O. Avendaño

THE PHILIPPINES got a special mention from US President George W. Bush during the first US Presidential Debate viewed by an estimated 56 million Americans and millions more around the world.

During the first part of the debate between Bush and his Democratic rival Sen. John Kerry, the US President mentioned the Philippines as he defended his decision to take on Iraq after 9/11.

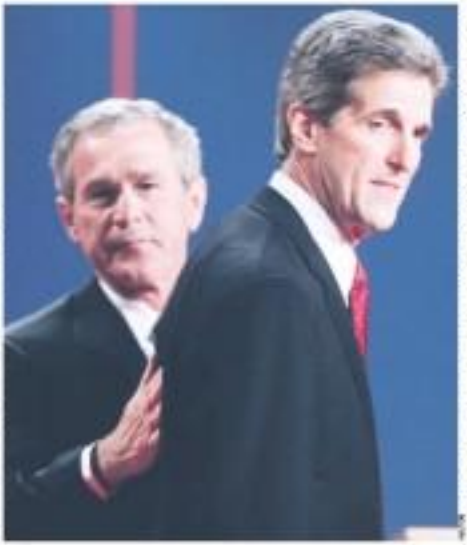
Kerry had attacked Bush for going after Saddam Hussein and allowing Osama bin Laden to go scot-free.

In turn, Bush answered that the US and its allies were making progress on the war on terror.

"But the front on this war is more than just one place. The Philippines ... we've got help ... we're helping them there ... we're trying al-Qaeda affiliates in parts there," Bush said in the 90-minute debate devoted to the issue of the US foreign policy and Iraq.

"And of course Iraq is a central part in the war on terror," the US President said.

Although the Philippines was



BUDDIES (Day 1 is out, just good spirits after the presidential debate between the main contenders in the Nov. 2 US election, the incumbent, Republican George W. Bush, and the Democratic senator from Massachusetts, John Kerry). The first of three scheduled debates was held at the University of Miami in Florida.

Oakwood mutineers beyond GMA reach, says justice secretary

By Philip C. Tubeza, Juliet Labog-Javellana and Armand M. Nocum

THEY ARE beyond the reach of even President Macapagal-Arroyo.

After days of seemingly conflicting statements from Malacañang and Camp Aguinaldo, the Department of Justice yesterday categorically ruled out amnesty for the Oakwood mutineers facing coup charges before civil courts.

"The cases against these have been filed in court. They are already beyond the reach of the President," Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez said, referring to 321 junior officers and enlisted men detained in the July 2003 takeover of the Oakwood Hotel in Makati City.

"There is no more reason that I know of for us to drop or withdraw the cases," Gonzalez added.

Defense Secretary Avelino Cruz raised on Wednesday the possibility of an amnesty after he told reporters that Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita had called a meeting of defense and military officials "to discuss and study the mechanisms for amnesty because this may need the concurrence of Congress."

On Thursday, Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye said something else. He said amnesty for the mutineers was now dismissed as a Palace meeting of defense, military and justice officials...

In an earlier statement issued by Bunye also on Thursday, a written to the possibility of an amnesty as part of a reconciliation process was edited out.

Talking to reporters yesterday Gonzalez said a supposed plan to grant amnesty to the Magdalo rebels after their leader publicly apologized to Mrs Arroyo was news to discussed in Malacañang. He said his troops had not given his department any directive to study such a plan.

He said the Department of National Defense also had not made any inquiries with the OIC about possible amnesty for the rebels.

The Makati Regional Trial Court is currently hearing coup d'etat charges against 32 soldiers over the failed mutiny. The Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) has also initiated court-martial proceedings against them and more than 200 other soldiers.

"That is the situation. The only possibility is to go grant a general amnesty, but that is for Congress to decide and not for the President," Gonzalez said.

He said that if a general amnesty was granted, the rebels would also be cleared of charges before military courts.

Gonzalez said Ms Arroyo could pardon the mutineers only after they had been convicted in court.

On July 16, Makati Judge Oscar B. Pimentel allowed at least 27 of the 32 accused to post a P100,000 bail each since there was not enough evidence to show that they led the mutiny.

Pimentel, however, denied bail to the alleged duty leaders on grounds that the evidence against them was strong.

Lawyer Roberto Pulido, the rebels' counsel, has asked the Supreme Court to stop the Sandiganbayan proceedings against the mutineers, arguing that the military court has no jurisdiction over them.

Pulido explained that Pimentel ruled on Feb. 11 that the charges against his clients were "not re-

Kerry wins 1st presidential debate, polls say

WASHINGTON—Democratic challenger John Kerry seized his ground with President George W. Bush in their first televised debate, delivering a strong performance that could put him back into the election race after weeks on the ropes, according to analysts who assessed the protagonists' sparring.

Instant polls conducted by US television networks gave a clear edge to the Massachusetts senator after a showdown Thursday night in Miami that was dominated by Iraq.

CBS showed Kerry the winner by 44-26 percent and ABC by 45-36 percent. A CNN/Gallup poll put the margin at 53-37 percent and said 46 percent expected Kerry to better place the Democratic ticket in the November 2 election.

Analysts agreed that neither Kerry nor Bush landed any heavy blows during the 90-minute session, a counter at the University of Miami, the first of three presidential debates before the November 2 election.

"This was the closest thing to a tie," said Larry Sabato, director of the University of Virginia's Center for Politics. "I really was impressed. Kerry was articulate and crisp for sure and Bush...For sure, a more fortuitous articulate."

MORE ON A10

Funny research projects win Ig Nobel Awards

WASHINGTON—An researchers who found a link between country music and suicide, and a man who patented his eyebrows hairstyle were lighthearted Americans for true but funny experiments on Thursday.

Other prizes went to a soft drink maker that bottled Thomas Edison's urine in London and sold it as a designer drink, and to a man who entered a competition for "Lazy and Rude," according to which if footballs or the floor for free.

Belgian is animal's best friend in Palawan

By Marites D. Dañguilan

THERE'S a good story to be told on the final leaky of St. Francis of Assisi, the patron of animals.

It is a mentoring afternoon on the pier of Puerto Princesa and carabaos are being loaded on a ship bound for a slaughterhouse in Manila.

The shippers are pushing the carabaos—lame and all—like sardines and the inmates of Iwahig are beginning to stomp and wound each other. The boat slip, which could have somehow from 300-400 heads, has not even started.

"We, they are going to be slaughtered, but do they have to suffer?

Sir if Belgian animal welfare expert Ardeo Bott, 68, would help it.

She stands by the pier and makes sure the carabaos aren't loaded too early so they can stretch their legs. She checks that the trucks are not overcrowded, and that the shippers give water to the carabaos during the trip.

Another has long ago realized that the cannot do anything to save the carabaos from slaughter, but she makes sure they are not maltreated or made to suffer any more than they have to.

BOTT, CONTD ON A6

GSIS chief got ₱11-M housing loan in 2 days

By Martinez Bondoc and Gil Cabunoguan Jr.

WINNERS? Garcia got an P11-million loan in only two days. But then he would "rather borrow from retail."

The loan made up the latest accusation to be made against Garcia, president and general manager of the Government Service Insurance System, by members of the militant Confederation for the Unity, Recognition and Advancement of Government Employees for corruption and a failure of the Esperanza ng Bayang pawang GSIS (EBG).

According to documents presented by his accusers, Garcia applied for a P11-million loan on Nov. 4 last year under the Salary Loan Program of the GSIS, and he secured P11 million two days later.

The GSIS Salary Executive Committee issued Resolution No. 005-03 approving the loan to Garcia, who used the money to buy a P28-sq. m. house-and-lot unit in Loan Lane Street, Loyalista Village, Makati City. He is under fire for alleged mismanagement and misuse of state pension funds.

"I'd rather borrow than steal. There's nothing irregular with this because any member can get a housing loan as two to five days if their papers are complete," Garcia said yesterday in a phone interview. "I was invited like an ordinary GSIS member."

He said he decided to buy a house because he deemed it more

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
SATURDAY, OCTOBER 2, 2004
Second FRONTPAGE

WEATHER FORECAST

Bishop links 4 execs to 'jueteng'

By Dinoro S. Rivera

FOUR national officials are involved in "jueteng," or the illegal numbers game, one of them receiving as much as P8 million a month from the gambling operations, claimed the anti-gambling vigilante, Dungualeon Archbishop Oscar Cruz.

Bro Cruz, who chairs the fire-fighting Bayan Laban sa Jueteng, refused to identify the officials, but he urged the public to "see whether they were elected or appointed, as to provide details of the "private and confidential inquiry" that was supposed to have uncovered the scam.

At a joint press conference in Manila yesterday with Philippine National Police Chief Edgardo Aglipay, Cruz said that he knew of at least six mayors protecting and promoting jueteng.

"They are giving protection (protection, not just beneficial tolerance)," said Cruz who headed off all attempts by journalists at the forum to extract more information from him.

The six mayors is receiving P500,000 a month from the jueteng operations in his jurisdiction, he said.

He said he would give the names of the national officials that he is accusing of involvement in illegal gambling to Aglipay "when the evidence is strong."

Aglipay pledged to provide security to anti-gambling advocates like Cruz who has reportedly been receiving death threats.

Cruz, who claims to have learned out about the four national officials' operations in the middle of the year, said the private inquiry called "Team de Coronas" followed the money in the jueteng operations.

He said those who confessed the money scandal the information from small-time jueteng collectors and the operators led them to refute the jueteng collection men.

"You will come to a stop (where you cannot trace it any higher), and/or his or her name stopped on all those lists of jueteng collectors. He wants to find nobody else above those four (officials)," he said.

The suspect officials who are holding national office operate in Luzon and the Visayas and are still active in government, said Cruz.

He said two of the officials receive payola for giving protection to the jueteng operations. The other two seem to be actively involved, "so if they are really part of syndicated gambling," he said.

Cruz refused to name the officials, saying he wanted to be very sure of their involvement before ravaging the lists.

"We have to be sure. We would like also to protect their good names. We will give the matter to General Aglipay to check the validity or credibility of our findings," he said.

The jueteng is a P30-billion a year business, patronized mainly by the desperately poor who hope to improve their lives by winning the numbers game.

Aglipay said that "if evidence is given to us, we will file some."

He urged lawmakers to pass more stringent laws against illegal gambling in much the same way that Congress increased the jail sentences for those arrested for illegal gambling, pushing and possession.

Aglipay said the "100 percent" of those arrested for illegal gambling are able to post bail because they are bankrolled by the jueteng syndicates.

"Sometimes the jail term is just one day, so we have to let them go," he said.

He said the PNP has a list of so-called gambling lords who are already being monitored but who have been arrested. Those who are caught are always able to post bail and resume their operations.

Going after the gambling lords is like arresting drug lords. Arrests are done among the small jueteng operators. You do not know who's behind it. It's hard because those arrested won't tell who the (gambling lords) are," the PNP chief said.

The Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines is mobilizing to its diocesan social action centers nationwide to monitor the PNP's commitment to the anti-jueteng drive.

Cruz, the most visible cleric in the Church's anti-gambling campaign, is reportedly undergoing daily death threats. Last June he refused the offer of a security detail from the Pangasinan police.

CBCP spokesperson Msgr. Hermando Coronel said the CBCP-supported Cruz's investigations is to the involvement of national officials in jueteng.

Coronel said the CBCP-Nation al Secretariat on Social Action, Justice and Peace will submit its findings on jueteng to the CBCP plenary assembly in January.

He said the CBCP would also set its partnership with the Ombudsman's office to initiate action against erring officials.

PNP DIRECTOR General Edgardo Aglipay, center, and Bishop Oscar V. Cruz listen to a speaker during a press conference by anti-gambling advocates in Manila on Friday

End violence, bishop urges Tabara killers

SAMUGO (2/7)—Bishop Vicente Navarro yesterday called on the killers of rebel leader Ka Adriano Tabara to put an end to the violence, saying that killing was "not the best way to promote peace."

Tabara, 53, chair of the Bataluyan-ayan Pambansang Manggagawa-Pilipinas and Stephen Ong, 19, the boyfriend of Tabara's daughter and a Silliman University student, were gunned down by suspected commando hitmen in Quezon City last Sunday.

The SPMLP, a breakaway group of the Communist Party of the Philippines, has blamed the CPP-NPA for the killings.

Tabara is said to have been on the CPP-NPA list after he broke away from the movement's leadership. Correspondent Carlito F. Bosmos, PDI Visayas Bureau

Mahathir arriving in Manila on Monday

By Julie Lilotap-Javellana

PUTRAJAYA: Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad is arriving on Monday to hold talks with President Macapagal-Arroyo and business leaders.

The Presidents will host dinner for Mahathir at the Palace on Monday, the start of a two-day working visit for the ex-premier who retired in 2003 after 22 years as chief honcho of the Muslim-led Southeast Asian country.

He is scheduled to address a session of the Philippine Business Conference on Tuesday.

Mahathir's visit comes as the government and the separatist Moro Islamic Liberation Front prepare to begin formal negotiations to end the secessionist war in Mindanao, a crucial step in finalizing out terrorists and long-simmering development to the island.

It was under Mahathir's leadership that Malaysia agreed to act as host and facilitator of the peace talks with the Muslim separatists.

Malaysia is also leading an international team of observers to monitor a ceasefire and help promote an atmosphere conducive for the success of the talks.

Mahathir, a critic of the US-led war against Iraq, is still regarded as an influential figure in the Malaysian government.

SBMC
SUBIC BAY MOTORS CORPORATION
INSPECTION DATES: SEPT. 28, 29, 30 & OCT. 1
AUCTION STYLE PARADE
Quality is Our Top Priority!
OCT. 2 AROUND 400 LOTS ALL TYPES OF TRUCKS, SUVs & PASS. VANS
OCT. 3 AROUND 345 LOTS MORE SUVs & PASS. VANS
3-DAY PUBLIC AUCTION
OCTOBER 2 & 3, 2004
TRUCKS, SUVs & PASS. VANS
Catch These Locally-Acquired Vehicles!
BLDG. 1457 ARGONAUT HIGHWAY, SUBIC BAY FREEPORT ZONE 2222
MAIN OFFICE: (047) 252-1268 • SALES OFFICE: (047) 252-1320 / 1330 • FAX: (047) 252-1319
REGISTER & INQUIRE ONLINE!! •• www.sbmcauctions.com (info@sbmcauctions.com)

Ombudsman set to probe Lorenzo's cell, jet fuel bills

By Armand N. Nocum, Carlito Pablo and Norman Bordadora

MALACAÑANG Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita said he will not be interrogated by the Office of the Ombudsman and Congress for allegedly charging to the government his high cellular phone bills and jet fuel expenses while at the helm of the agency.

Lorenzo is allegedly incurred P334,287 in cellular phone bills and P.8 million in jet fuel expenses which he charged to state-owned agencies of the Department of Agriculture.

Assistant Ombudsman Emesto Garcia said Lorenzo's appearance as the witness member of the Cabinet will not shield him from investigation particularly if it is proven that he dipped his hands into public funds.

"If there are evidences that he used public funds to maintain a high living, then we can initiate investigation and if evidence warrants, file graft charges against him," said Garcia.

Lorenzo, a cousin of the former Second Family Jose Miguel Arroyo, with a declared net worth of P111.122 million as of 2003.

Garcia, however, said they will send for the Commission on Audit to formally endorse to them Lorenzo's high telephone bill.

"We will immediately start the investigation as soon the COA endorses the report to us," he said.

According to Garcia, this is the first time they are investigating an official who has incurred that much phone bill.

In Congress, Rep. Rafael Mariano (party-list Anakpawis) is initiating a congressional investigation into Lorenzo's alleged cellular phone expenses.

"It is grossly unjust to farmers and fishers struggling to keep afloat from the impacts of globalization while Lorenzo kept talking and charging bills to his employers," Mariano said.

Mariano said that aside from Lorenzo's cellular phone expenses, Congress will also look into the other bills he rushed up while DA chief.

These include P2.5 million in funds incurred by delegates officials of the El Nido dry opening which he said was a mere private affairs, and P5.3 million for radio spots "at a time when the phenomenon was did not occur."

COA records show that Lorenzo separately charged his phone bills to Quedancor Fund, Corporation Corp. (Quedancor) which he chaired and the Landbank.

Lorenzo remains chair of Quedancor and the Land Bank of the Philippines.

The left-wing Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas also called for a more stringent audit of Lorenzo's expenses.

The KMP revealed that Lorenzo also illegally charged in Lorenzo, another DA attached agency, the P640,000 bill for his private trips in a year or.

Politico linked to shabu megalab

By Norberto E. Flores and Jhoreen Magallanes
PDI Visayas Bureau

ILOILO: Interior Secretary Angelo Reyes yesterday ordered the investigation of an influential Cebu-Visayas politician who is being linked in the recent discovery of an unprecedented drug syndicate behind the operation of the country's biggest "shabu" laboratory in Mandaue City which was raided last week.

Reyes, who was appointed as Dangerous Drugs Board officer in charge early this week, ordered the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency Director Reynaldo Mercado Saveedra to look at all angles in the case and to swiftly submit a report.

Reyes, however, declined to identify the politician involved pending the result of the PDEA investigation. PDEA sources said this politician lost in the May elections.

But Sen. Aquilino Pimentel Jr. and Cebu Rep. Antonio Cuenco urged drug enforcement authorities to unmask the principal. Pimentel explains behind the big Mandaue shabu laboratory.

Pimentel and Cuenco stressed that the PDP and PDEA should enhance all efforts to trace and pin down the big fish who own and operate the Mandaue drug laboratory, in the face of suspicion that they enjoy the protection of well-placed officials in the military and law enforcement agencies involved in the raid.

The Philippine government is now seeking custody of the suspected syndicate mastermind identified as Cabuz de Jesus. He was arrested by Hong Kong authorities Wednesday night at a ferry terminal bound for Manila.

Cuenco, chair of the House committee on foreign affairs, said he would propose to the Department of Foreign Affairs the cancellation of his passport to be used in deportation to the Philippines.

Cuenco was expected to meet with DFA officials yesterday afternoon to discuss the matter.

De, 28, was detained by Hong Kong authorities as he tried to flee Hong Kong to neighboring Macau. He has been under surveillance since he arrived in Hong Kong last week.

METRO

EZ2 18 5 SUERTRES 6 9 5 FOUR DIGIT 4 7 7 8 (for lowest order)

MEGALOTTO 6/45 6 5 36 28 43 44

Your on-your-feedback inquirer.net/camalig/newsguru (SMS) or 261 (Smart) Desk Editors Carmen B. Bitoc, Peter G. Dipasupil

7 suspected robbers dead in shootout

By Leila B. Salaverria

SEVEN suspected members of a robbery group were killed after they shot it out with operatives of the National Bureau of Investigation and the Philippine National Police along the South Luzon Expressway in Laguna yesterday afternoon.

The suspects, said to be members of the Digoy robbery group, were reportedly on their way to Manila after they had allegedly robbed businessman Eddie Lim in Barangay Luna, Calamba, Laguna earlier, said NBI-National Capital Region Director Edmund Aruiguy.

Aruiguy headed the NBI team that participated in the operation.

NBI Director Reynaldo Wycoco, who had also rushed to the scene, said in a radio interview later that three or four suspects had escaped. None of the identities of the seven fatalities were immediately available.

According to Aruiguy, a joint team of police and NBI agents were tracking down the suspects' yellow Ford Ikon (PKJ-405) when they sensed the lawmen's presence.

Shots then rang out from the suspects' vehicle, prompting the operatives to retaliate, Aruiguy added. After an exchange of gunfire, he said, motorists near the Southwoods exit on the Manila-bound lane of the SLEX, seven suspects lay dead. None of the policemen or NBI agents were hurt.

Recovered from the Ikon were an undetermined amount of cash, a shotgun and several short firearms, said police authorities believed to have been used by the suspects.

Aruiguy explained that the NBI had learned earlier that the Digoy group would strike Friday, but they got the jump on the lawmen.

Later in the afternoon, the NBI received a tip that the group had just struck in Barangay Luna in Calamba at around 2 p.m.

Upon receiving the information, the NBI rallied up the National Capital Region Police Office to respond to the tip, then waited for the suspects at the southbound exit.

Aruiguy said members of the Digoy group were ruthless whenever they rob establishments to initially ward off suspicions about their activities.

He said that when the group conducted the Calamba robbery earlier, the suspects were already robbed gasoline attendants and private establishments. With Christian S. Esguerra and Marlon Ramos; PDI Trainees Junnie Barroso

DEAD. Of the road he were alleged members of the Digoy group suspected of holding up a businessman in Calamba yesterday before one of them was gunned down by police and National Bureau of Investigation agents. ALEX BADAY

AUV Express coming up, but jeeps and buses need not worry

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE AUV Express is coming to town.

An accelerated 15-minutes, more popularly known as the "15," will soon have regular commuter vehicles converted into air-conditioned units.

The transportation department is preparing an order that would define the franchise of the loosely organized P8 or public Asian Utility Vehicles, according to transport officials.

The public vehicles can't pick up or drop off their riders except at the terminals. An AUV Express must fill up the seats from the terminal and drop all passengers to the end point or the other terminal so they do not compete with the jeepneys and buses.

The Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board said it was just waiting for a department order before releasing a set of parameters that would "legalize" the operations of the AUV Express.

The yellow-plate AUVs, according to LTFRB chair Rizalo Elena Jiménez, were currently operating "outside the provisions of their franchise." He said there are also those from the "mga tatú" or yellow plate AUVs with metro, which should operate like a cab.

"In the meantime, we are not apprehending the AUVs while the department order has not been released," said the LTFRB chief.

Jiménez said that once the department order is out, her agency would allow 9,044 franchises currently in limbo to be converted into franchises for the AUV Express.

He said they hope to implement the order before Christmas so the system would be in place before the holiday traffic worsens.

The LTFRB had identified 200 routes and 300 terminals for the AUV Express, with each route set to extend 30 kilometers.

"The idea is for the AUVs not to compete with jeeps and buses, so it's for mid-sized routes," said Jiménez. "But it should not be more than 35 kilometers because AUVs are not designed for mass transit," she added.

Barzaga said the LTFRB was likely to adopt the fare scheme of vehicles, for like, that is, P6 for the first 5 km and P1 for every succeeding km. Fare vehicles are seeking a fare hike to P10 for the first 5 km and P1.50 for each additional km.

"The AUV Express fare scheme would be similar to the vehicles for hire. The difference is the Express would charge per head. For hire vehicles would base their fare on the distance," said Jiménez.

Nanny foils abduction try

By Nancy C. Carvajal

A NANNY's presence of mind prevented abduction from running off with the five-month-old son of a television reporter in La Piña yesterday morning.

Three suspected members of a child trafficking syndicate were arrested yesterday after they allegedly tried to abduct the son of BBC 12 television journalist Dave Lebanon.

"The nanny (name) was able to run inside a neighbor's house to seek help," Lebanon said in a telephone interview. The incident took place in front of the victim's house in Sta. Cecilia Village, Las Piñas.

According to Lebanon, the child's nanny, Julie Dayanan, an ear habit, would take her usual out of the house for some can every morning after he left for work.

Police said that the suspects chanced upon Dayanan and offered her an undisclosed amount of money in exchange for her child.

When the nanny refused, the suspects—Sue Kamal Singh, Gian Singh and their driver Jasmin Bajada, all 1109 Bacian St., Barkaran, Bacolagar City—drove away in a maroon Isuzu van with plate number CBP-102.

But the suspects reportedly returned after a few minutes and tried to grab the child from the nanny's arms.

As she ran to a neighbor's house for help, other neighbors called up the village security officers who coordinated with the police in apprehending the suspects.

Responding policemen were able to stop the van after a brief chase inside the village. All suspects and said parts of the village had been closed to stop the suspects from fleeing the area.

The three denied the charges. Police said the suspects reeked of alcohol when they were arrested.

SPO2 Romeo Bernardo said they would conduct further investigation to see if the suspects had any record or had been previously charged with child trafficking.

Firemen found drinking under fire

By Melvin S. Flores and Tina G. Santos

INTERIOR Secretary Angelo Reyes yesterday ordered the relief of a ranking fire official and two firemen who were caught drinking while on duty inside a fire station in Quezon City last Thursday.

In the same time, Reyes directed Interim Undersecretary for Local and Order Mateo Cerezo to investigate the incident and institute appropriate proceedings if the charges were proven.

As a consequence, Cerezo ordered the relief of Fire Chief Insp. Augusto Mibac, Fire Officers 2 Reinerio Bravedacia and Reynaldo Bayaya, all of the Aghan Fire Station along Aghan Road.

He said station was relieved based on the principle of command responsibility.

Motorists and firemen, on the other hand, were dismissed from their posts after they were caught drinking inside the fire station.

Records showed that Quezon City Fire District personnel chief Romeo Bilo received reports and text messages from concerned citizens about an ongoing drinking session inside the Aghan Fire Station on Thursday.

Accompanied by two policemen, Bilo went to the fire station to check the veracity of the report and found Bravedacia and Bayaya drinking on the job.

Inappropriate wear

The two were dressed in undershirts and were slippers, Bilo added.

A woman dad to shoot and four other unidentified men were also seen inside the station, he said.

Residents also claimed that they heard gunfire coming from the station, prompting them to report the incident to authorities.

Cerezo said the firemen could be dismissed from the service if found guilty of violating the rules implementing Republic Act 6713 (the Code of Conduct and Ethical Standard for Public Officials and Employees).

Help comes to Jocelyn and Joe

By Tarra F. Quismundo

BREATH lighter in more ways than one.

A day after giving birth to triplets, Jocelyn Cervantes now has a ready smile for her visitors. Except for occasional pains, after effects of her delivery by caesarean section, the 24-year-old first-time mother is sure free from anxiety: worry had bounded her a day ago.

"Without the big generosity by it (an Israelite family), and Jocelyn from her [only] at the name of the Montreal Heart Bank and Transplant Center, I am [forward of Dr. Jose Rodolfo Memorial Hospital, which she shares with 16 other new mothers.

The state-run hospital, where Jocelyn gave birth to three babies on Thursday morning, would shoulder the expenses of her delivery and medication, and the treatment for the premature triplets who have been placed inside incubators for an indefinite period.

"Based on our social classification system, the Cervantes couple are indigents, which means that the hospital will fully subsidize all the medical needs of the triplets and their mother," said hospital director Rubén Flores.

Jocelyn and Joe were married four years ago in a mass wedding ceremony in West Fairview, Quezon City.

Joe, 23, a part-time waiter, and Jocelyn, a housewife, had been unable to prepare for the coming of one baby, let alone three. But after an evaluation of their financial status, the hospital decided to pay for all the triplets' medical needs and Jocelyn's operation and recovery.

Flores said he expects the hospital bills to run to almost P500,000.

The hospital, which charges a subsidized amount to home-off patients, had already spent P1,000 for Jocelyn's C-section delivery. For the triplets, the hospital bought three vials of surfactant, medication that helps the premature babies' lungs to mature. The medicine alone costs around P75,000.

The babies are currently being administered surfactant inside the hospital's Neonatal Intensive Care Unit to make sure their lungs, no complications may arise in their first three days, said Dr. Mary Anne Gao, attending neonatologist.

Though born underweight, Joshua Jay, Jocelyn and Jocelyn, called by the hospital staff as babies A, B and C, are doing just fine, besides predictable complications, said Gao.

"All pre-term (premature) babies have risks that two of the babies are stable. We are just a bit worried with baby C," Gao related.

United Auctioneers, Inc.
TRUCKS, VANS & HEAVY EQUIPMENT
5 DAY PUBLIC AUCTION
OCTOBER 21, 22, & 23, 2004
(THURSDAY, FRIDAY & SATURDAY)
Sale starts at 8:30 AM SHARP!
Catch the Best At
SUBIC BAY
INSPECTION DATES: TUESDAY TO WEDNESDAY
REGISTRATION DATES: TUESDAY TO SATURDAY
ALSO AVAILABLE: LOCALLY ACQUIRED VEHICLES
FUSO CANTER DUMP TRUCK
TOYOTA PRADO
HONDA ODYSSEY
SUBIC TEL NOS.: (047) 252-1025 • 252-1555 to 58 Fax no.: (047) 252-5049
MANILA TEL NOS.: (02) 8291868 • 8200581 • 426-3986 • 455-7410 • CEL NO.: 09178868824
Fax no.: (02) 525-8288 EMAIL: info@unitedauctioneers.com WEBSITE: www.unitedauctioneers.com

NPAs kill 4 cops in Davao

By Anthony S. Allada and Ferdinand O. Zuasola
PDI Mindanao Bureau

DAVAO CITY—Four policemen were killed in an ambush by communist guerrillas in Baganga, Davao Oriental, yesterday morning, authorities said.

Provincial police chief Supt. Catalino Cuy said New People's Army (NPA) rebels ambushed the policemen in the center of the town, shooting two dead.

The rebels snatched two other policemen who were later found dead in the outskirts of the town a few hours after the ambush, Cuy told reporters.

The attack occurred several days after soldiers from the Army's 30th Special Forces Company raided an NPA camp in Barangay Coog here. No rebel was found in the area.

Cuy identified the slain policemen as police officers Rantilito Bonghanoy, Jose Marlon Avellanosa, Juan Gambong and Alfredo Cunaran.

Cuy said the four were in a patrol car on their way to market to buy supplies when they were attacked by rebels believed to be under the NPA's Front Committee 15.

Cuy said the rebels fled on motorcycles with an M-16 Armalite rifle and four .45 caliber handguns taken from the policemen.

Col. Agane Adriatico, military spokesperson for Southeastern Mindanao, said soldiers helped the police track down the rebels led by a "Kumander Doming."

Rebs free jailed comrade

SUSPECTED communist guerrillas ambushed a prison van to free a detained comrade, officials said yesterday. Five suspected NPA rebels hit the prison van Thursday in Mawab, Compostela Valley, snatching captured NPA intelligence officer Jordan Donillo as jail guards took him to a court hearing, a police report said.

Four people—two jail guards, a clerk and a driver—were hurt in the attack.

The NPA has stepped up attacks against the police and the military in the province in recent days.

Last month, two police officers in San Isidro town were gunned down by suspected rebels. NPA rebels also stormed an outdoor dance party and disarmed a police officer. Aside from Davao Oriental, communist rebels also stepped up activities in other provinces.

Elsewhere, government troops shot dead a member of a breakaway communist guerrilla faction in a clash near Arayat, Pampanga on Thursday, Army spokesperson Lt. Col. Buenaventura Pascual said.

The man was a suspected member of the Revolutionary Alliance of the Children of the Sweat, an NPA offshoot, he added. *Reuters, Jofelle P. Tesorio, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau, AFP*

Rebels attack troops guarding Malampaya natural gas project

ABOUT 20 communist guerrillas ambushed troops guarding the $4.5-billion Malampaya natural gas project, the country's largest energy project, killing a civilian and wounding four soldiers, an Army spokesperson said Friday.

Lt. Col. Restituto Padilla, a military spokesperson, said the soldiers were on board two Army trucks on their way back to the main Army base in Puerto Princesa on Wednesday when about 20 New People's Army rebels tried to stop the convoy.

The trucks were coming back at around 11:30 a.m. after transporting personnel and supplies to the headquarters of Task Force Malampaya which is guarding the Malampaya gas project when the troops were attacked in Sitio Ibangley, Abongan, Taytay, Palawan. An hour-long firefight ensued.

"Malampaya is safe and secure," Padilla said. "Our security forces are on a high-state of alert and a pursuit operation is under way to punish the rebels."

Padilla said a civilian who had hitched a ride on one of the trucks was killed and four soldiers were wounded in the initial burst of gunfire. The rebels were driven back in a brief gun battle.

The wounded soldiers were taken to the nearest hospital for treatment.

The civilian fatality was identified as Fernando Huerta who died of multiple gunshot wounds in the chest and legs. The injured soldiers were identified as Master Sgt. Diosdado Banago and Staff Sgt. Nestor Mendoza, both of the Melito Glor Command of Southern Tagalog operations in Palawan, he said.

Some residents of Sitio Ibangley said they heard several gunshots that lasted for about three hours and saw some armed men took two rifles from the trucks when the military fled.

Pursuit operations against the rebels were launched by the 570th Composite Tactical Wing based in Puerto Princesa. Two UH-1H helicopters and two OV-10 Bronco attack planes were dispatched to hunt the rebels who fled to nearby jungles. Navy gunboats also set up a blockade around Taytay town.

The military said the rebel attack in Palawan was a rare occurrence.

Padilla said not a single incident had been reported since November 2001 when a military task force was formed to secure the energy project.

The project is operated by a consortium led by a unit of the Royal/Dutch Shell group. Shell Philippines Exploration BV and ChevronTexaco have 45 percent stake each, with the remaining 10 percent held by the state-run PNOC Exploration Corp.

The Malampaya field, which has recoverable reserves of 2.5 trillion cubic feet of gas and 85 million barrels of condensate, fuels three power stations with a combined capacity of 2,700 megawatts.

In May, the defense and energy departments agreed to beef up security in Malampaya because of fears of possible sabotage by militants such as the Abu Sayyaf group.

A $21.5-million project to install an air and surface defense system—comprising radars, communications links and weapons—is also planned to protect the single largest foreign investment in the Philippines. *Reuters, Alexis Papa and Jofelle P. Tesorio, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau, AFP*

Genuine Fil-Ams cry foul

By Jane Navarro

SAYING it's unfair to them, a handful of Fil-Ams with unquestionable papers said yesterday they, too, hoped for an immediate resolution of the case regarding Filipino-foreign players who allegedly linked their citizenships.

Ray Castillo and Mike Orduk, forming the nucleus of questionable cagers in other leagues, blasted that "Fil-Shoot" put the image of the genuine Filipino in a bad light.

"I don't have access to their papers but I think it's quite unfair to the real Fil-Ams," said Orduk, who was traded from the Turbohunyo to Purefoods last month.

The new-timer's spoke a few bits Filipino in other teams," added Castillo, a product of The Citadel in the UE-NCAA Division I ranks.

Talk 'N Text point guard Jimmy Alapag said he also hoped for a speedy resolution of the case, stressing "if there's a finding then we can just move on without the doubts and play basketball."

"If there's an finality, it's hard for the league, it's hard for the fans and it's going to be hard for the players because there always will be doubts," said Alapag.

Alapag's teammate, Air Thdaris, is among the players the Senate recommended for deportation last year after its findings showed they had dubious citizenship papers.

The others are Red Bull's Deonna Harp, Jun Ordonio and Orlando Rosario, Coca-Cola's Rudi Swarts and Rudy Rutfield, Sarangani Gladiator's Andy Seigle and Alex Clemons and San Miguel's Dorian Peña.

Purefoods coach Jong Uriquiza said several other locals in the dealings reportedly sought the end of the controversy, saying risks Fil-Ams give other teams cardiac schemings.

"Bahla, Sen. Loren Legarda, Shell and our team are always at the bottom of the standings simply because we don't have players who play like imports," said Uriquiza.

Team captain and assistant playing coach Alvin Patrimonio, meanwhile, expressed confidence on the initiative by Sen. Edu Lagtil and the Department of Justice to expedite the cases of the Fil-Ams, which was shelved more than a year ago.

ALAPAG: Hoping for a speedy resolution.

Red Bull airs side on brawl

"WE demanded an explanation but heard nothing from the organizers, we were driven out of the war zone just like that."

VILLANUEVA

Red Bull team manager Tony Chua gave this statement after the Barako ordered yesterday their team was disqualified after a fight-marred game against a Crown Bull. Chua claimed their players left on dual sets.

"We wasted time, effort and money after the team prepared very hard for the opening of the PBA only to get this," he added.

Rodjun Villanueva triggered the melee when he punched a Barako cager for hitting his 6-foot-5 frame in the neck with less than a minute remaining in the game.

Villanueva said neither his teammates urged him after the game but denied being jailed or detained after the fracas that prompted both teams to summon the cops.

"That player was physical throughout. He kept on hitting us with cheap shots. Testing the extent of my patience, he had suddenly gotten into my nerves that I felt there was no way to defend myself but to hit him in the face," said Villanueva.

Red Bull coach Yeng Guiao said the officiating was out of the ordinary he had seen.

"At this level of competition, each team should bring a referee to explain to the referees of the other countries the instructions involved in the game. Without an international referee in the delegation, it's hard to communicate," said Guiao.

Guiao added the referees obviously have neither the expertise nor experience in handling such risky situations as evidenced by the poorly officiated games they played prior to the brawl.

Since the Fiesta's Cup is a PBA-sanctioned tournament, Guiao said the league should properly consider the well-being of the teams before letting ballclubs plunge into action.

"If it happened elsewhere, Barako would be thrown out while the rest of the team plays on. The organizers disqualified the team without any explanation at all," said Chua. Jane Navarro

WHAT'S INSIDE

'Da King' a no-show in Muslim wedding in Davao

DAVAO CITY—Embattled presidential candidate Fernando Poe Jr. did not show up at a Muslim royal wedding here yesterday, an event which President Macapagal-Arroyo attended.

Poe and the President were among the principal sponsors at the nuptials of Nur Misuari to Madelene Lacang of Penang, Iloilo and Shirly Ann Dimakuren Paglas, the daughter of Sultan Bashier Paglas Ill.

The senior Paglas, who campaigned hard in Maguindanao for Poe's candidacy in the May presidential elections, said he unconditionally invited the rival candidate's "in the spirit of reconciliation" but the actor had declined.

He said Poe, who is pursuing an election protest against Mrs Arroyo's presidentiality, was simply not available.

Former senator Loren Legarda, Poe's running mate in May, showed up at the wedding which was held at the Waterfront Insular hotel here.

Asked if she was surprised at the President's presence at the wedding of a daughter of a staunch opposition supporter, Legarda said she had always known that Ms Arroyo would be going.

She said she was not intimidated by the President's presence. After all, they have been friends for a long time and she even became the President's "kumare" when she stood as sponsor at the 2002 wedding of Mayor Ramon, the President's eldest son, Legarda said.

The President and Legarda sat in the front row on either side of British Ambassador Basil Dimond.

Legarda was seen briefly talking to the President before entering the reception area.

Other government officials who stood as sponsors were Secretary Jesse Dureza, the presidential assistant for Mindanao; Secretary Luis Lorenzo, presidential adviser on job generation and chair of the Local Bank of the Philippines; Ambassador Zacarias Rosario, governor of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao; Davao City Mayor Rodrigo Duterte and local political leaders identified with the administration and the opposition.

The President's visit here yesterday was merely for the opening of the "Wow Mindanao Exposition" organized by the Department of Tourism and top Mindanao leaders.

She also met with officials of the Mindanao Economic Development Council (Medco), an attached agency of the Office of the President, to discuss the Mindanao peace process.

Ms Arroyo was to spend the night in the city and return to the capital today.

—Sydney Alfeche, PDI Mindanao Bureau

Hydraulic Cylinder Repair Kits

(Made in Japan)

COPIERS

Canon • Olivetti • Savin

Also Available : LIQUID COPIERS

COPYTRADE

FORD EVEREST

DEALER TEST DRIVE

SPECIAL TOKENS

FORD BALINTAWAK

Automatic CENTRE

BANKARD

A YCG Member

0% Christmas in October

APPLIANCE EXHIBIT

G/F, Glorietta 3

October 1 - 14, 2004

• Low rates thru Pay Easy Plan installment

• 0% for 3,6,12 months installment plans on top-brand appliances

PEP

VISIT the new Automatic Centre at Greenbelt 1

AYALA CENTER

AUDIOVOX Canon Carrier CONBURA Electrolux HITACHI JVC

Kelvinator Kodak LG GERMANIA Panasonic PHILIPS

Pioneer SHARP Shinco TOSHIBA Vivitar Whirlpool

For corporate orders, please call Malou at 893-5160 or Vicky at 251-0381

Automatic CENTRE

SOGO

Ignore media, Soliman tells HR experts

DAVAO CITY—Social Welfare Secretary Corazon "Dinky" Soliman yesterday asked the country's capitalized executive experts to ignore media reports about the poor state of the economy, saying they can't advertise efforts to unite business and government in solving the flood crisis.

"Common ground is difficult to find, especially if one allows (the) media to dictate one's perspective on a daily basis where the norm is to smack one depressing news one after the other," Soliman said. She spoke at the 41st annual conference here of the Personnel Management Association of the Philippines (PMAP).

She asked the human resource experts to help guide ministers designed to energize government and human resource on poverty reduction.

"We need to see encouragement and positive advice" instead of the unending stream of "complainers who think we will never make it," she said.

Soliman said efforts should be made to find the common ground that could among Filipinos, instead of focusing them on differences on grounds of culture, economics, politics and social status.

She said that when these differences are highlighted it cause conflicts and violence. "Increasing numbers of people join the ranks of Tabo (poor because the movement of the world) are currently of the non-Christian," Philippine Collegian, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

Bill seeks to punish editors who refuse to print or air reply

A CONGRESSMAN from Northern Samar has filed a bill seeking to punish editors and publishers of newspapers and radio and television stations managers who refuse to air or print the reply of those accused of alleged wrongdoing in their reports.

While the Constitution guarantees freedom of expression, freedom of the press and freedom of speech, a person alleged to have committed wrongdoing in print or on air should have the immediate right to refute the accusation in the same format, said Rep. Raymundo Vicencio who filed House Bill No. 3072.

Vicencio said he has observed that the subjects of such articles and broadcast reports were not given equal or equal chance to defend themselves or clarify the issue affecting them.

"Media has the power to influence perception of the public, providing the thrust that mold public opinion," Vicencio said in a press statement. He noted that media can "make or break a person."

His bill, Vicencio said, provides that the editor-in-chief and publisher or the station manager of a radio or television station who refuse to air the reply of the subjects of such reports should be fined P30,000 for the first offense, P50,000 for the second offense, and P80,000 with a jail term of not more than 30 days for the third offense. Cynthia D. Balana

Bring home a brand new PC for as low as 20,500

NMC Cardosa celebrates with team manager Terry Capistrano.

La Salle needs another great coach after Franz

By Jasmine W. Payo

AFTER the victory, La Salle woke up the morning after with only a short list of possible replacements for its overachieving championship coach.

Franz Pumaren has undeniably pulled an amazing feat in college basketball after steering the Archers to five championships in seven years.

However, his impending departure has left a void that the UAAP champion team has contemplated this early.

"Many people now want him back next year. After the game, everyone was chanting 'one more year,'" said La Salle team manager Terry Capistrano. "But I think the fact that he announced it, it's a strong indication that (he's) it. He needs to rest. It's about time he takes a break, seven years can be tiring. So the best thing to do is to let him unwind."

Relieved

Pumaren, indeed, looked relieved after the Archers bagged the championship by annexing defending titlist Far Eastern U Tamaraws in a dramatic 68-63 victory last Thursday.

"I think I've accomplished everything any college coach could wish for," noted Pumaren, who wrapped up his seven-year stint with an impressive 96-25 win-loss record. "I've given up so many offers in the professional ranks just to coach this team, because that's how much I love coaching college basketball.

"I'm sure the school will try to talk to him, but if he'll reconsider, I think it's a remote possibility" said Capistrano.

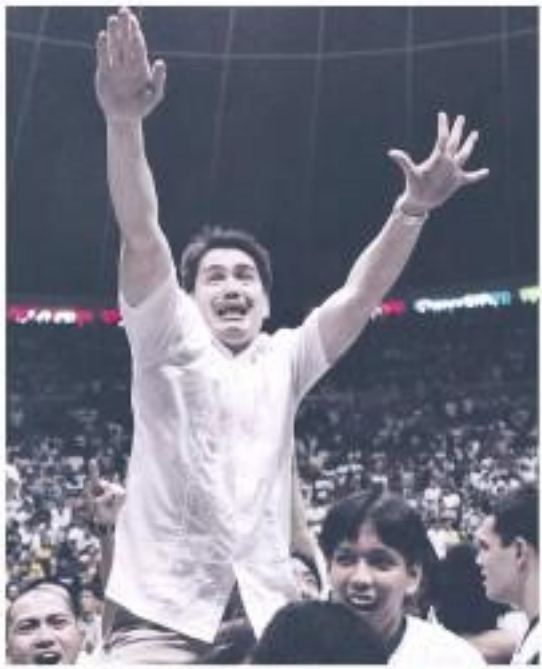
La Salle athletic director Dennis Orcollo is similarly doubtful. "The last that he (Franz) announced his desire to step down, it will prompt La Salle to look for a new coach. But we give him credit for the five championships. The school will now have to look around, and maybe we'll have a short list in two to three months," he said.

Reliable

Aside from Pumaren, only forward Jeremy Gaco is leaving the team. All the other veteran players like Mike Cardenas, Joseph Yeo, PJ Cabis, JV Sang and Rhye Acuña still be back to defend the title.

Mario Bonifacio, a 6-foot-8 high school standout from La Salle Streamhills, will also beef up the Archers' center court.

"We've still main recruit but we're also talking to a couple of other players," Orcollo said. "Our chances next year are still pretty good," he added.



LA Salle coach Franz Pumaren gets a victory ride after the Archers beat the Tamaraws for the UAAP title.

Indeed, there seems no reason for Pumaren to worry. He has established his dynasty and legacy in La Salle.

He now leaves a team that seems poised to establish a new one, but they'll need another great coach to take them there.

UAAP-NCAA All-Star today

TRIMUL'ls be an abundance of talent as newly crowned UAAP champion De La Salle and NCAA titlist Philippine Christian U head the cast in the UAAP-NCAA All-Star Showdown today at the Araneta Coliseum.

Kicking off the event is Game 1 of the women's basketball finals between mentor-and defending champion Adamson at 10 a.m.

Antenor took Game 1, 67-64, last Thursday.

In the All-Star games, La Salle and mates will team up this time to form the UAAP 2 squad together with standouts from UE and Adamson. They will battle the NCAA 2 team of University of Perpetual Help, San Sebastian and Arellano and St. Benilde Cumulative in 3 p.m.

The NCAA 2 grouped PCU Letran, Mapua and Jose Rizal will collide with the UAAP 1 crowd of the Ateneo, University of the Philippines, University of Sto. Tomas and National University at 2 p.m.

Coaching UAAP 2 is La Salle's Franz Pumaren, who picked Archers Mike Cardosa, Joseph Yeo, PJ Tang, Jeremy Gaco, Jaeqiun Colonia. He added Ateneo Jay Cuan, after Antenor JA Tenorio forged off due to a GP team requirement. Also in the fold are Eagles JC Intal and Paolo Bugia, UE's Ali Caruddin, Pacle Alabanza and Rookie of the Year Rincy Arellano, and Adamson's Jiro Sison.

NCAA 1 mentor Bal Cabagnot released Perpetual's Ney Jarin, Rhod Ibera, Fito Reanzon, Vladimir Joy, Edred Barroso and Manuel Carreon. He added NCC's Joe Sajonia, Jep Mears and Red Vicente, San Beda's Mon Arguelles and Arvanie Pinero, and St. Benilde's Jay Sagad.

NCAA 2 coach Lorenzo Navarro will hook on PCU's rookie MVP Gabby Espinas, Robert Jaisa, Jan Gamido, Mon Bengo, Jason Castro and Joel Bells. Also suiting up are Letran's Mark Andaya and Boyet Bautista, Mapua's Kevin De Klaan and Christian Guzmann, and JRU's Mcdo Santos and Marco Rigodon.

PCU's Ray Rated leads UAAP 1 with MVP honored Santos, JC Bicarb, Dennis Miranda, Jeff Chan, Dan Salvo and Elbert Jugo, UP's Jun Almeda, Jireh Barber and Joanne Cervantes, UST's Dino Vint Laurence and Warren de Guzman, and MLQ Jay Mendoza. The event will benefit the Jaime Sina UE Softball aid project. Jasmine Payo

Santos torn between turning pro and staying on with FEU

JERWIN Daco of La Salle and Arwind Santos dive for the loose ball in the final seconds of the UAAP finals.

MAYBE it was the frustration of coming to nothing follow up loss of the UAAP title.

Anyway despite a relatively colorful college career that let run close the book on, departed Arwin finds he isn't done yet with the UAAP.

And if he can have his way, he's going to play one more season with the FEU Tamaraws next year without compromising his options down of turning professional.

"I will apply for the PBA draft next year. But if possible, I will want to play for FEU. The PBA season starts after the UAAP so lotta people go. It has been done before," said Santos.

La Salle's Jhun Alladin set the precedent in 1999. After being drafted by Alaska, the PBA top rookie pick still led the Archers in their second straight championship before finally joining the Aces later in the year.

The next PBA rookie draft is tentatively set on Aug. 7, 2005, but the season starts in October, or just around the end of the college season.

But what has been done before may that the UAAP removed the possibility of the Alladin-fashion happening again. In fact, University of the East's James Yap tried to do it the year, but the UAAP ruled that once a player is drafted, he is ineligible to play for his school.

"There is a rule that once your name is called in the draft, you cannot play anymore in the UAAP. That will sneak," said UAAP president Dennis Aron.

"Unusual" but chance will be if he can convince next year's board to amend that ruling.

"I'm now the breadwinner. I'm also helping my brother and his family," said Santos, explaining the urgency to turn pro soon.

What he can't put to words is the desire to suit up in a Tamaraws uniform one last time. Jasmine Payo

Praising Pumaren

SPECTATOR

Al S. Mendoza

All I said, I expected La Salle to win. So, when the Green Archers defeated the Far Eastern University Tamaraws on Thursday, 68-63, to win the UAAP basketball title two games to one, I was the least surprised.

Hey, folks, I am not trying to brag here. No. It's just that La Salle coach Franz Pumaren is so good. Very even. I am still wondering why nobody's gotten hold of him for the PBA backboard up to now.

He's become too expensive, maybe?

Cut the crap.

I know he gets a princely sum coaching La Salle but that doesn't mean no PBA team can afford Franz Pumaren. I don't they pay 2000 a month or even a nondescript coach there? And that amount most team owners would consider expensive coach.

Give me that fantasy and I'll easily expect a solution-seeking job at the New York Times—even if the offer from the Big Apple biggie bears my pay by a three stand dollars a month.

Two hundred thousand pesos a month in this country, why that's more than enough to make me live like a king in Hong Kong, Mongolia-ren, Patagonia.

Give Dave, a fan of Bob like "Sweet" or "Pingpong" or "Bodagit" can be had at 70 bucks.

Give dave, the folk still channels new, rarities-old tradition they allow anyone to pick ready-to-cook vegetables from the backyard without permission from the owner.

Give Dave, everybody sees everybody's products: cadaveras, camote tops, camahar, kang-kong, string beans, patola, ampalaya, calabasa, eggplant, etc.

A host of possibilities, with squash flowers to it, you what I had for dinner over there Thursday an hour or so after La Salle had completed its monumental comeback in the throne since becoming a mere spectator in the UAAP finals last year between FEU and Ateneo.

No double frying Pumaren was the boss coach on Thursday although FEU coach Koy Banal could not be denied as he had put up a gallant stand in the face of adversity. In fact, I gave credit to Koy in the closing seconds of the game, with the crowd on the feet.

With nine down in 24.9, Lichelle up by one, 66-65, Koy Banal devised during timeout what was supposed to be the U-ifs winning play for the Tamaraws. Assuming Jervis "Bondi" Mendoza to get the ball, Miranda however missed what could have been the most memorable shot on a night filled with thrills and replays.

Although Miranda saw himself being double-teamed, he managed to still shoot himself somewhat from the right flank. Getting a view of the ring from the perimeter, he did an off-balanced takeoff and fired. Pitifully, the basket shot circled the ring and missed out, allowing a rare team a second shot filled every available space at the 20,000-seat Ultra-big Dome.

In the ensuing scramble for the most important rebound of the night, Tamaraw Arnold Santos, the 6-foot-3 Archer rebuts Santos defeated for the MVP plum.

With 2.2 seconds left, Cardosa coolly sank the free throws and sent mobilized its delight as FEU missed a desperation shot from across the court.

After the game, Cardosa said, "I kept telling my teammates, have some guts. (We can do it, guys)."

Said Franz Pumaren of Cardosa, as sets wrapped around Cardosa's neck. "This is my MVP."

Sorry, Cardosa was consistently brilliant all throughout and I raise a glass to him.

But this night of nights, I do not only lift a glass to Mike Cabis, whose last of three triples with 24.9 ticks left gave La Salle back the lead, 56-55, after Mark Isip put FEU on top, 60-55, on back-to-back hits with 2:0 seconds remaining. The Mike, I will lift a whole bottle of champagne.

This is a team of destiny," said Franz Pumaren of his boys. "We believed in ourselves... that's the secret of this story."

From 1998, Franz has given La Salle five UAAP crowns, missing just one 16-title appearances in the last seven years of the league. If that's not Hall of Fame stuff, what is?

Sir, Franz, it's time to move on to what you've said in your valedictory speech. Sir, Franz, as the amateur basketball, there's nothing to prove anymore.

PBA, here I come?

Register exotic pets, animal lovers told

THE IUCN Iguana is your living room must go out and be counted. Your shihtzu, python, too, can't slip out of this census.

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources has called on the owners of "wildlife pets" to register their animals with the agency between Oct. 11 and Dec. 9.

Failure to do so could mean seizure of their pets by the DENR, whose spokesperson got hungry and could love some—and end up eating the once-caged creature.

Environment Secretary Michael Defensor issued an administrative order on Thursday allowing the "60-day registration"—an amnesty period for those owners of the restrictions on wildlife ownership and trade under Republic Act 9147.

Known as the Wildlife Resources Conservation and Protection Act, the law was signed by President Macapagal-Arroyo on July 30, 2002. It requires, among other things, that the government keep a record of wildlife species under the care of private individuals or businesses establishments.

The records system covers both exotic (imported) or indigenous pets, regardless of whether the animal is on the endangered list or not. Such pets range from lizards, snakes, birds, to turtles, primates, monkeys, tigers and rumor-swollen pythons—as in anaconda.

The registration can be done at any DENR office nationwide, Defensor said. With fanfare on

Belgian is animal's best friend in Palawan

Front page A1

"There is the Philippine Animal Welfare Act which states that any form of cruelty shall be penalized even if the transporter has obtained a permit from the director of the Bureau of Animal Industry. Cruelty in transporting includes overcrowding, placing of animals in the trunk or under the hood of vehicles," she says.

Caring for wildlife

Jackie, mother of four and grandmother of six, first came to the Philippines in 1980 with her husband from de Ridder, an engineer assigned in Leyte.

When her husband's contract was over, they went back to Belgium. In 1990, Jackie became a widow. In 1995, she went back to the Philippines where she decided to live in Puerto Princesa. "She fell in love with the place and its wildlife."

In 2000, Jackie, together with Filipino and Belgian friends founded the Palawan Animal Welfare Foundation (Paws) to rehabilitate wildlife seized from poachers in the island and to return them to their natural habitat.

At present, there are 30 Paws members who live in Belgium and 10 Filipino members.

In the beginning, the group worked on easing the suffering of animals in Puerto Princesa. Later, they started rescuing stray animals roaming the city proper, and rescuing that caribou were wound and during shipment.

In 2001, Jackie started some projects to rescue the caribou. She wrote letters to the Department of Agriculture asking them to establish a sanctuary for seized caribou as they did not have to be sent to the slaughterhouses.

Paws started a victory when the Caribou Protection Ordinance of the province of Palawan was signed. This law protects the population of caribou as well as their proper shipment. Jackie acknowledges Vice Governor Dovil Pores de Leon for authoring the ordinance.

Adopt-a-carabao

She also started an adoption program for rescued caribou bound for the slaughterhouse. With funds from its Belgian members, Paws would purchase the animal, put it up for adoption with farmers as common takers.

"We know we cannot save all the caribou from the slaughterhouse," Jackie says, "but each rescued animal is a victory for our cause."

They had already rescued 20 caribou which have been adopted.

Jackie regularly visits the caribou in their new homes to make sure they are treated well.

They also plan to establish a sanctuary for caribou that are no longer qualified for adoption.

Paws volunteers that caribous for slaughter are in the right age. Males should not be less than 7 years old and females should not be less than 11 years old.

City pound

As for the rest of the animal population, Jackie has created an adoption program for dogs and has started a campaign of sterilization and castration to humanely regulate the population of dogs and cats in Palawan.

Paws, with funding from the World Society for the Protection of Animals, UK, also worked for the recent renovation of the Puerto Princesa dog pound.

Paws also has a mobile clinic—a two-cage trailer pulled by a motorbike for the transport of small animals. Jackie and volunteers round up on short trips to sterilize animals for free, or to visit dogs they had rescued, rehabilitated and found new homes for.

First cat house

Jackie has set up what could probably be the first sanctuary in the country. This is a screened-off area in her yard, where she keeps feral cats or strays after they have been sterilized. They stay for a day or two, and when they have recovered, she sets them free.

Since spaying and neutering of dogs and cats is clearly a pet project.

"Aside from keeping the overpopulation of strays under control, it will help reduce the spread of rabies," she says, adding, "The city administration has kindly supported my activities. We are working together smoothly for the welfare of the animals."

Company she keeps

Jackie says that she prefers the company of animals to people. In fact, she lives in a modest home in Barangay Inensan, Puerto Princesa with three dogs, two cats, and seven chickens.

She has a great friend—Nina Lubiano, president of the Manila-based Philippine Animal Welfare Society, who herself lives with more than a dozen dogs and cats.

Funny research projects win IgNobel Awards

Front page A1

or less five seconds, it is safe to eat.

The annual awards, presented at Harvard University in Massachusetts by the publishers of the Annals of Improbable Research, are a spoof of the Nobel prizes and purport to honor those of scientific research journals and newspapers for scientific efforts worth poking fun at.

Jim Gandhach of the University of Alabama said he got here mail when he first published his study showing that people who listen to country music have higher rates of suicide.

He said it does not hold true any more.

"The country music that we have today is not the same kind of country music that was related to suicide back when we did this," he said in a telephone interview.

He said the findings, published in 1992, surprised him too.

Jillian Clarke was a Chicago high school student when she investigated the "5-second rule" that states if food falls to the floor for fewer than 5 seconds, it is safe to pick it up and eat it.

She found, in a survey, that 1% percent of US women and 56 percent of men were familiar with the 5-second rule, and used it to justify picking up and eating dropped treats, or letting their children do so.

Clarke swabbed floors at the University of Illinois and found them surprisingly clean of microbes, thus justifying the rule.

Hair style

Frank Smith of Orlando, Florida, won his engineering IgNobel posthumously for patenting his peculiar combover—a way of covering up a bald spot with hair.

"He actually had a diagram and a contract to the method that he used," Smith's granddaughter, Heather Smith Adams, said in a telephone interview.

"There was a specific pattern—you had to grow out your hair in a particular length and there was an actual pattern for how you laid the hair over one side and then combed it over to the other side," added Smith.

"You know how controversy here that strings [on]? That is to overall hat strings look. I didn't know for a long time that he ever had a comb over."

A chemistry IgNobel went to Coca-Cola Company of Britain "for using advanced technology to convert liquid from the River Thames into Dasani, a transparent form of water, which for promotionary reasons has been made unavailable to consumers."

One hundred thousand bottles of the product went pulled from the market last March after unacceptable levels of bromate, a potential cancer-causing chemical, were found. Coke is studying a new British bottling location. Reuters

Alaska, FedEx to tour malls

HOME Grown of Alaska and Bonaves Grande of FedEx are expected to lead their respective teams' appearances at Robinsons Place Manila and Robinsons Galleria respectively, today as part of the ongoing PBA Get-to-Know-Us at Robinsons Malls promotion.

The Alaska and FedEx cagers will meet and greet their fans who will get the chance to have their picture taken with their favorite players or get their autographs. Both squads will also conduct their respective team marketing days where each team will assist in own activity and do its own events.

Also on tap in the mall-hopping tour, organized by PBA Properties Inc. and supported by Accel, Stella and Mail and Store, is the PBA interactive display set exhibit composed of website gallery, hand and shoe prints, giant inflatable basketballs, goalfill wall, and a ball room.

The PBA interactive stations are set up on two designated Robinsons malls each week till Oct. 31 to be spiced up by a session of visit by the PBA cagers and teams.

The activities at Robinsons Place-Manila and Robinsons Galleria will end tomorrow with Robinsons Novaliches and Robinsons Iloilo hosting the venue Oct. 4-10.

The event is also expected to draw up interest in the upcoming which kicks off its new season tomorrow featuring San Miguel Beer against Talk N Text in the Ginebra Philippines Cup at the Araneta Coliseum.

Red Bull and Barangay Ginebra players will visit Robinsons Pampanga and Robinsons Cainta that on Oct. 11-17 featuring Mark and Mel Lopez, respectively while Gino Cruz and Sun Miguel will be at Robinsons-Iloilo. Boni and Robinsons-Ilaya Cezar when the event is next staged on Oct. 18-24.

The meets already set-up on Oct. 25-31 with Talk N Text and Purefoods featuring as Robinsons Lipa and Robinsons Galleria, respectively.

AMA's Vanessa Peter, a 17-year-old German student, prepares to return a serve by Choi Seung-hi of South Korea. Peter won. EDDA D. RODRIGUEZ

HK duo drubs RP pair for boys' doubles title

TOP SEEDS Martin Sayer and Lui Xiao Peng of Hong Kong bagged the boys' doubles title by drubbing the second-seeded Filipino pair of Kyle Joshua Dandan and Ralph Kevin Barte, 7-6 (5), 6-3, yesterday in the 2004 Enerson Tablet-Pictures Foundation International Juniors Tennis Championships at the Ynares Socio-Cultural Sports Center in Pasig City.

Sayer had earlier advanced to the singles final, beating seventh-seed Ralph Kevin Barte, 6-2, 6-2.

Sayer, ranked No. 174 in the ITF Juniors and the singles top seed, will meet unranked host Nico Hugo De Ocampo Yu in today.

Hugo De Dios pulled off a 7-6 (8), 6-2 upset win over second-ranked Taiwanese Chung Huan en in the other semifinal match of the event also supported by Dulux, adidas, Prince rackets, Today's, Panasia India and Holcim Ynares Manila Galleria.

"Chung is an offensive player so I need to change the pace of my ball," said Hugo De Dios of Dasmariñas City.

Hugo De Dios, training under former Davis Cupper Benjamin Ilanes in the Subic Bay International Tennis Academy, expects a strong challenge against the big-serving Sayer.

"Sayer has a good forehand and it will be tough to beat him. But I will do my best," said the 17-year-old Hugo De Dios, who also trained in the United States last year.

Playing in the girls' singles final also set at 9 a.m. today are third-seed Filipino-German Anja Herman Shaw and fifth-seed Japanese Ayumi Okuma.

Shaw, 17, counted top-seed Russian Chin Irina (6), 6-4, 6-1, while Okuma, a 14-year-old novice from Cebu City outclassed seventh-ranked Korean Jeong Yoon Young, 6-0, 6-1.

"I'm happy to be in the final. I think it will be a tough match. Okuma can play hard and flat ball. She's tough," said the 5-foot-8 Shaw, who had competed in European Tennis Association tournaments and won a semifinalist in two ITF Juniors Circuit.

Shaw, whose mother is a Filipina, was born in Saudi Arabia and grew up in Hinchlohen, Wiesbaden's town in Germany.

Meanwhile, today is the start of the two-day qualifying rounds of the Pitmen Group International Juniors Championships slated Oct. 4 (6).

SEA Canoe Championships attract 10 national squads

SUBIC BAY—Presidency of the venue gives Filipino athletes an edge to their bid to pocket maiden competition against Thailand Meet in the 48th Southeast Asian Canoe Championships and the 3rd Junior Southeast Asian Canoe Championships which start today in Subic, Zambales.

This was the announcement of 80 team coach Lenore Escalante who has been training her athletes since three weeks ago in the waterfront of the Filipinas's Wharf Resort Inside the Subic Bay Freeport Zone.

Leading the host team's bid are Jessard Saure, Southeast Asian record holder of the 1000-m junior kayak single and Pham Ronald Dalagan. Yap bet for the 1000-m K1 a 17-year-old Marvin Amposta who will compete in both the junior and seniors competitions.

Maxwell Cajot, who has been a consistent performer in the national pools-time trial, is expected to excel in the 100-m canoe singles.

April Elise Peñalosa, holder of the 100 junior 200-m kayak single, is the topbet in the women's side.

The Philippine grade A test for three days against nine other South-east Asian countries, including powerhouse teams Indonesia, Vietnam, Myanmar and Thailand which are expected to crowd Luzon at the top.

A total of 65 gold medals are up for grabs in the event supported by the PSC, PCSO, Philippine Canoeing and Makro Cebu, SBMA, Subic Fisherman's Wharf Resort, Subic International Hotel, DMC, Five Rivers at Wawa, Nissei Added Mobile, Mc-Donald's-Olongapo, Coppertone Sport, Tribu Sandals, Subic Bay Medical Center, Aurora Communications Systems, JDG Productions and Bonia Bilateral Dos Jairo Ybañez.

Filipina booters suffer loss

THE PHILIPPINE women's football squad suffered a 1-0 defeat at the hands of Indonesia Thursday evening but remained in contention in the Asean Football Federation (AFF) Women's Championship in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam.

A moment's loss of concentration just 10 minutes after kickoff gifted Indonesia with the winning goal in spite of the Filipinas' dominance of the last 65 minutes of their inaugural contest. A striking 20-yard blast by Linawati Bustabas before half time almost pulled the fighting Filipinas even. They continued the same attacks in the second half, keeping the Indonesians on the defensive until the last seconds of the match.

Now in a must-win situation in advance into the semifinal round, the Philippines takes on Singapore this afternoon (tomorrow) at 3pm.

OPEN TO SERVE YOU!!!

2nd Level, Global City, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig, Metro Manila

BESA'S

BESA'S SHOES AND SERVICES

"We make shoes and bags look new again, the right way."

Offering complete shoe repairs, renewal, shine, color re-sole, protector, bags, luggage, attache cases, metal parts, buckles replacements etc. Using all imported materials as good as the original or even better.

We also offer Made to Order footwear. Measure to fit shoes for men, ladies and children. All Works Guaranteed for comfort, durability and style. Signature and branded catalogs available. European leathers and rubber soling similar to high fashion brands use for a very reasonable price.

Visit us now and we shall be glad to be of service to you!

OTHER BRANCHES

South favored over North in All-Star

TODAY'S SCHEDULE (All PHT)

7 a.m.—Basketball (Girls 17-18 years old)

1 p.m.—Luzon Championship (Table competition)

5 p.m.—NBC Show and Talent Quest finals

7 p.m.—All-Star Game

BACOLOD CITY—Former PBA heroes Al Solis' South Selection is slightly favored over the North squad when they clash at 7 p.m. today in the NBC (National Basketball Conference) All-Star game at the University of Bacolod gym here.

Five-season MVP Chito Loyzaga, former pro Ruben de la Rosa, Andy Lacuesta and ex-NU Bulldog Mike Guiguinto, all of Tribu Eagles, will bounce the South cagers.

The other players are Emile's Cooler Jayme Jr. and Francis Sotto, Otanes Cotton Eggs Ochavo, Cagayan de Oro Team Jayson Alfredo and Julius Kavales, and Tribu Eagles's Marlon Pinedo, who replaced Marlon Bauzo of Cesamca.

The NBC All-Star Weekend is sponsored by Negros Country Club, Leonardo Hotel, Sarcenas, Gerry's Grill, Ohio's Restaurant, Tokyo Tom Bar, Angie's Bar, Fifteen Bar and Bee-Hive Bar.

GSIS chief got ₱11-M housing loan in 2 days

Front page A1

practical than renting out to Metro Manila.

Sen. Ramon Magsaysay Jr. called on Garcia to step down in view of the "massive unrest" over the GSIS supposed failure to meet the requirements of government employees.

Magsaysay called on President Macapagal-Arroyo to let Garcia go "and bowed the exit of the 1.5 million-strong government workforce who have suffered long enough..."

Palace for the defense

But Malacañang said the GSIS chief had to be done well in explaining his side on the controversies that the President assured him can still be patched up by him.

"Based on what we heard, and as far as these allegations [on the electronic card bidding were by Smart Bank of the Philippines] are concerned, he has explained very well his side, especially with the help of his assistants. I think what he needs to do is continue to answer all questions hurled [at] him," Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye told dzBB radio.

Bunye said the GSIS had been performing well: "[Its] income under Garcia is bigger compared to other administrations. We also heard from his assistants about the many projects undertaken during his term."

Nevertheless, Bunye stressed that Malacañang was not out to defend Garcia and that Mr. Arroyo had yet to decide on whether he would be retained or replaced.

Not more than 5

Garcia said that with the pay cut he imposed on himself following the controversy over the salaries and perks of government "fat cats," he now had to take his ₱930,000 monthly loan payments from his "other sources" of income.

"Our housing loan [process] takes not more than five days. In fact, we run an active forensics for that [as early as] 2002," he said.

Garcia said the GSIS had also lifted the ceiling for housing loans as long as the net pay and collateral of members made them viable for a loan applications.

But Lourdes Jasmin president Richard Gaite continued to allege abuse of authority on the part of Garcia.

"GSIS members have suffered as much under Garcia's management of the pension fund. Without any increase in our salary, he implemented an increase in our monthly contributions from 5 percent to 13 percent," Gaite said.

He said Garcia better limited the benefits of GSIS members by implementing such policies on the premium-based policy.

"Like housing loan, even if his claims that it was done through regular GSIS channels and procedures, is still suspicious and irregular in so much as most of the members are having problems acquiring loans that are much smaller," Gaite said.

But Garcia said: "These people from Courage think that once they are able to borrow, they no longer need to pay [the GSIS]."

He said all members could get their just benefits from the GSIS if their premium payments were in order and they had no outstanding loan balance.

Support

Garcia has received the support of a multisector group of government workers, a faction of the IMA, as well as the former members of the GSIS board of directors including Senators Magsaysay, head of the Presidential Management Staff under President Joseph Estrada.

Robert Barbers, speaker of the Joint Legislative-Executive Assembly of the IMA, said IMA president Albert Ilarde was not authorized to lead any mass action or file cases against Garcia.

Ruffy Biazon, president of the Confederation of Government Employees' Organizations, issued a statement urging all government unions, associations and workers to observe advisory, civility and fair play."

Biazon cited the reform programs introduced in the GSIS "which are designed to provide greater financial benefits and assistance to government employees and retirees."

The former GSIS trustee—former Junior Homeowners Cooperative Jr. Federation Secretary, Aida Nocum, Gilberto Macinas, Dr. Jessie and Ibalio—refuses to be cowed by the recent rallies staged by the group.

CHR case

But Courage members yesterday filed a case against Garcia before the Commission on Human Rights in connection with the violent dispersal of their protest rally at the GSIS Main Office in Pasay City on Sept. 28.

Gaite said that aside from the seven physical injuries that Courage members suffered, Garcia ordered in 2000, or the ban prohibiting the use of water cannons and tear gas during rallies.

"We will not allow Garcia's reign of terror and greed at the GSIS to persist," Gaite said. "If the Ombudsman, the CHR, the courts and in the streets, we will make sure that he is jailed down for his crimes against government employees."

The Department of Education employee union also said public school teachers were being shabbily treated by Garcia.

"The most worst hit by [the] income pressure are our public school teachers because they can't take out a loan anymore. They're running all the way here to complain," said Domingo Alabat, president of the Deped National Employees Union.

Alabat said they joined their counterparts over a year ago but that the GSIS only took matters really down.

He said the GSIS might have overreacted in ignore chain if not for the May elections, wherein the members served as poll inspectors.

Service records a mess

"The elections have passed and until now our service records [with the GSIS] are still a mess," Alabat said.

With about 500,000 public school teachers and counterparts in government and an annual contribution of about ₱12 billion, the Deped is the GSIS' biggest client group.

Deped employees have demanded Garcia's resignation for allowing employees service records to pile up.

Their chief complaints are that the GSIS did not record their loan payments or that now they could not take out a new loan, that it had made a issue of their records, and that employees were not getting their salary contributions for the mortality of their insurance policy.

With reports from Christine O. Avendaño, Tina G. Santos and Irene Z. Manalaysay

GMA photog survives Cebu dive accident

By Beatrice Magsaysay
INQ Visayas Bureau

CEBU CITY—A lifesaving photographer came close to drowning after taking underwater shots of President Macapagal-Arroyo scuba diving off the resort town of Moalboal on Cebu's west coast on Thursday.

Jerry Carmel, a photographer with the Office of the President, yesterday said that the mishap occurred between 1 and 2 p.m. on Thursday and that he was unconscious for 1-5 minutes.

Ms Arroyo, who inspected several projects in the province's capital on Wednesday, spent private time in Moalboal on Thursday that included Sen. Ramon Jr. Magsaysay, open and other national officials to the scuba diving activity), said she was not aware that a lifesaving photographer had been hurt.

Carmel said he was in the water with the Moalboal photographer had been hurt.

Carmel said he was in the water with the Moalboal photographer had been hurt.

Carmel said he was in the water with the Moalboal

The WORLD

Lito Lorenzo B. Dulce

US forces storm Samarra, kill 94; Iraq mourns 34 kids

SAMARRA, Iraq—The US military said 94 insurgents were killed on Friday as its troops and Iraqi forces thrust into Samarra town in a first effort to reclaim troublespots before Iraq's planned elections, while a shocked nation buried 34 children killed by car bombs.

In the United States, President George W. Bush and challenger John Kerry held their first presidential debate before the Nov. 2 ballot, with Kerry terming the invasion of Iraq "a colossal error" and Bush reiterating "the world is better off without Saddam Hussein."

Some instant polls straight after said Kerry had beaten the president. A Gallup poll for CNN gave Kerry a 46 percent to 25 percent win over Bush.

Iraq's hostage saga showed no letup, with Jakarta confirming on Friday that two Indonesian women were among the 10 latest people to be kidnapped. Al-Jazeera television said the two were seized alongside an Iraqi and two Lebanese working for an electrical equipment firm.

In the aftermath of Thursday car bombings in which the 34 children died, the group of suspected al-Qaida operative Abu Musaab al-Zarqawi claimed, via its website, responsibility for three suicide bombings in Iraq.

The authenticity of the claim on www.ansar1.net/vb/ could not be verified.

The Samarra operation, 125 km north of Baghdad, started before dawn, with the US military saying 16 forces had ordered the city hall and police stations.

The offensive followed tomcat by the interim government to win back reaches of lawless territory in the Sunni Muslim triangle before November to prepare for the January poll.

"In response to repeated and unprovoked attacks by anti-Iraqi forces (Lt-military terminology for insurgents), Iraqi Security Forces and Multinational Forces secured the governorate and police buildings in Samarra... on Oct. 1," the military said.

A US military spokesperson said 94 insurgents had been killed and nine wounded. No forces declared any casualties on the US-led coalition side.

The figure for the wounded contrasted with an earlier statement from a doctor in the town. Dr. Khaled Ahmed at Samarra's main hospital said: "We have received 28 killed and 75 wounded in the fighting."

At least three US soldiers were wounded in the fighting and five insurgents were detained, a military spokesperson said.

The governor of Salahuddin province, where Samarra is located, cautioned on Thursday that fresh fighting risked plunging surrounding towns into violence. AFP

IRAQI mourners carry the casket of resident Ahmad Dhaidan the Sadr City section of Baghdad, Iraq, Oct. 1. Dhaidan was killed in an overnight air strike by US forces, according to local witnesses. AP

Pope to beatify Mel Gibson's mystic 'muse'

VATICAN CITY—Never one to shrink from controversy, Pope John Paul is again putting controversial figures on the road to sainthood, including Spanish's last emperor and a mystic nun who inspired Mel Gibson's film on Christ's passion.

With Sunday's ceremony in St. Peter's Square, the ailing 84-year-old Roman Catholic leader will have beatified some 1,340 people, more than all his predecessors combined.

The Pope will confer beatifications—the last step before Roman Catholic sainthood—on five people on Sunday. The two most controversial could not have been more different.

One was born in Austria-Hungary, lived a life rich in running water and the other in a castle, but both have ignited as much passion after death as they did in life.

Anne Catherine Emmerich, a sickly German mystic nun who lived from 1774 to 1824, has been called "Radiolium" by one her book. "The Dolorous Passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ," that gave Gibson some of the most grisly details.

Although Gibson said in his film "The Passion of the Christ" was true to the Gospels, he clearly turned to what the "Mad of Dhormoor" saw while gripped in visionary ecstasy.

The episode where Mary mops up her son's blood after his sadistic scourging is pure Emmerich. His Gospel translation a "hooded devil inciting Jewish mobs demanded Christ's crucifixion or following him as he carried his cross.

Jewish groups condemned the film, saying it would spur new bouts of visceral anti-Semitism. They now fear that showing Emmerich closer to the glories of the altars, as saint-hood is known, will only make matters worse.

"I think the timing of this is unfortunate and just extremely damaging," said Rabbi Gary Bretton-Granatoor, director of interfaith activities for the Anti-Defamation League.

"Had this happened five or 10 years ago, only those in the know would have noticed. But now, after Gibson's film, Emmerich's anti-Semitic writings have spread in a much wider audience," he said by telephone from New York.

Jewish leaders say the film and Emmerich's new popularity will reinforce deicide charges against Jews, which had been officially repudiated by the Second Vatican Council in 1965.

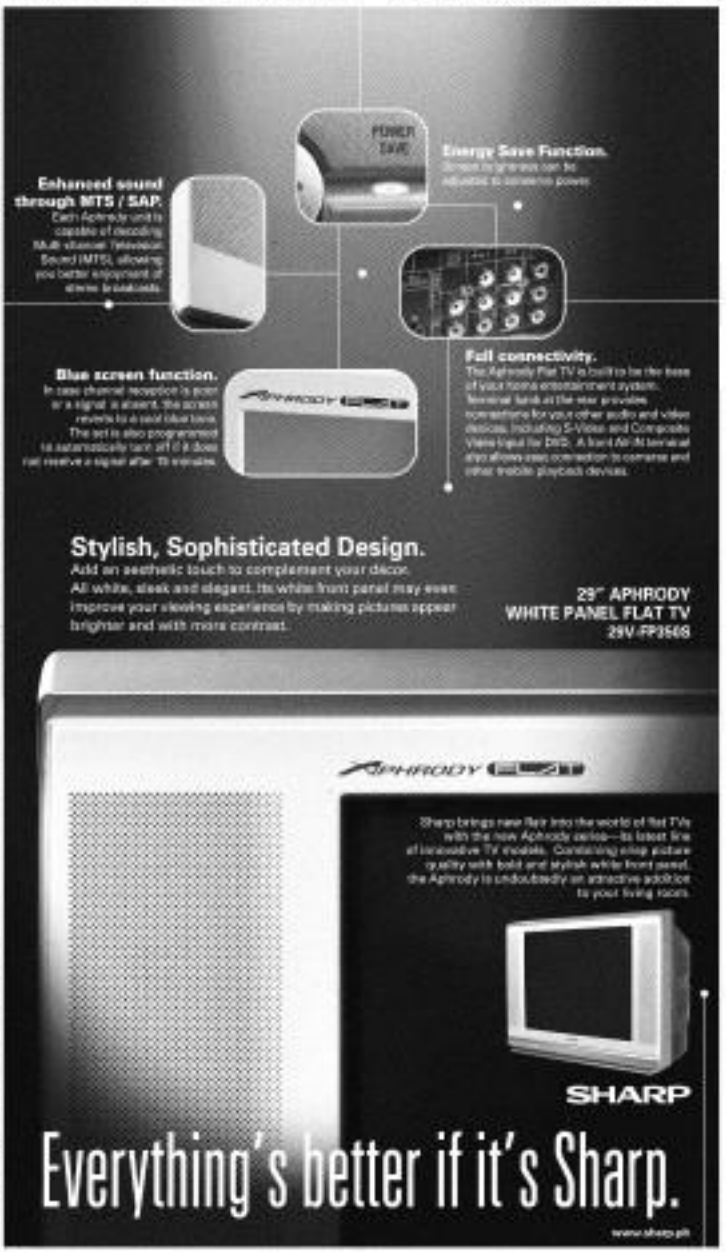
Emmerich was an invalid by the time she was 14 and had the stigmata, the unexplained bleeding of the hands and feet similar to the wounds of the crucified Christ.

The beatification of Karl I, last emperor of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, has aroused an uproar in Vienna, with critics denouncing him for his army's use of poison gas during World War One or lampooning him as "the parrot saint of losers."

It has also angered the Austrian Church, which has been tasked by a bureaucrat assailed as a "dictatorship" over Vienna, to publish a decade for saying he performed a miracle by healing a fraud, an end of her cancerous veins and leg sores.

Karl, a devout Catholic who inherited the throne in 1916, made feeble efforts the following year for peace talks with Western.

Forced out of the end of the war in 1918, his army into exile first in Switzerland—from where he twice tried to retake power in Hungary—and then Portugal, where he died in 1922. Reuters



Blair faces heart op, vows to lead on

LONDON — British Prime Minister Tony Blair went to hospital on Friday to correct an irregular heart palpitations, but he vowed to survive a full-blooded coup to oust him after his doctors expected to do so soon.

"I feel fine," Blair told a huddle of reporters as he left his Downing Street home smiling and waving.

Blair's office said the procedure was routine and he would be back at work early next week.

"The 51-year-old premier has frequently looked haggard in the past 18 months, the toughest of his career with a country divided over war in Iraq and his own ratings plunging.

In an unprecedented move, Blair set his own departure timetable, saying he would not seek a fourth term in office.

"So I wish to serve a full term? The answer to that is 'yes'. Do I want to go on and on and on? The answer to that is 'no'," he said. "I wouldn't want to put myself forward as a fourth election, I don't think the country would want me to."

A British election is expected in May next year and polls suggest Blair is odds-on to win again.

His party won a crucial parliamentary election on Friday in Hartlepool, northeast England, with a much reduced majority.

Blair's main Conservative opponents were beaten into a humiliating fourth place by a fringe party that advocates withdrawal from the European Union. Analysts said they looked in no shape to challenge the prime minister next year.

"The one party people are really not eyeing for in large numbers is the Conservative party. That is the central fact of British politics at the moment," said Anthony King, professor of politics at Essex University.

Blair, 51, had heart palpitations last last year and suffered a "mild recurrence" in August, his office said. He will stay in hospital overnight, sources say, before he is back to work next week — for a schedule that includes a trip to Africa.

"I've got this routine procedure on my heart which is connected with the type of thing that happened last year," Blair told television networks. "It's not particularly alarming but it's something you should just get fixed."

Blair insisted he would not leave the political stage any time soon nor shy he tough votes for his powerful finance minister Gordon Brown, long hungry for the top job in government.

But analysts said Blair might eventually become a lame duck leader and quit sooner.

Blair said Brown would make a "superb" leader of one dozens of leadership would be unharmed if the incumbent hung on for another term. "I don't think it's fair Gordon or to any shape or form at all," he said.

Blair's foes doubted for years that Blair and Brown struck a deal he would one day hand aside for the Chancellor of the Exchequer. But Brown supporters reported their rise to be in charge will soften the inevitable blair has now spelled out.

This way, Blair has sometimes looked weary and drawn as the relentless pressure of justifying his decision to go to war in Iraq, and the violent aftermath, took its toll.

Earlier this year, there were even rumors that he had considered standing down, something he has since firmly denied.

Blair's ambitions. Paul Ramadelin, said the procedure — the technical name for which is catheter ablation — was low risk. It does not amount to full surgery and will be carried out under local anaesthetic.

"The recovery time is short, with patients able to resume to work and undertake full activities within two to three days," he said.

Analysts said Blair's pledge had reinforced his position in the short term but he might have difficulty serving until 2009, the likely time of the election after next, with a looming leadership change overshadowing his final years in power.

"I think he would become a progressively lamer duck towards the end of the third term," Peter Kellner, chairman of pollster YouGov told Reuters. "I would expect him to resign well before the end of the next term."

Reuters

BLAIR

WorldBriefs

Gaza's bloodiest day

JABALYA, Gaza — Twenty-eight Palestinians and three Israelis were killed on Thursday, Gaza's bloodiest day in four years of conflict, as Israel's army struck back after a rocket attack left two Israeli children at a border town. Prime Minister Ariel Sharon approved an intensified offensive to re-occupy Palestinian run parts of northern Gaza and stop rocket firing that has provoked despite raids and given Israel its critics of his plan to relinquish the territory. In the deadliest incident in the spiraling violence, an Israeli tank shell killed seven Palestinians near a school in Jabaliya, Gaza's largest refugee camp, as Israeli forces thrust deep into the militant stronghold for the first time. Israeli troops raiding northern Gaza killed 21 other people, including militants and bystanders. Medics said about 150 Palestinians were wounded. Earlier on Thursday, gunmen ambushed and killed two Israeli soldiers and a woman out jogging. A Hamas cadre on foot on the southern Israeli town of Sderot on Wednesday killed two Israeli children, aged 2 and 4, visiting their grandparents on the eve of the Jewish festival of Sukkot. *Reuters*

Hostages in Iraq

JAKARTA — Two Indonesian women working for a British company in Iraq were among 15 people kidnapped by an Islamic militant group, officials in Jakarta confirmed Friday. Indonesian foreign ministry officials said the women, who were pictured wearing Muslim headscarves in video shot by the militants and aired on Arabic television, were from Jakarta. "They are housewives," spokesperson Marty Natalegawa said. Senior foreign ministry official Ivanly Ilyas later confirmed the women's identities as Rosidah and Rafikah. Jakarta told Indonesia said that the women were working for a British company but it was not known in what capacity. The Indonesian women were captured alongside six Iraqis and two Lebanese working for an electrical equipment firm. An Islamic fundamentalist group in Iraq of the captured captives, all men, were shown in the video, with the captors pointing machine guns at them. The characters also show footage showing the two women. *AFP*

Jakarta bomber named

JAKARTA — Indonesian police on Friday announced a breakthrough in the hunt for suicide bombers behind last month's attack on the Australian Embassy in Jakarta, naming the suicide bomber who detonated the deadly blast. Police chief Da'i Bachtiar said DNA tests comparing samples found at the scene of the blast with those and blood from suspects' families confirmed the bomber's identity as Iim Kurniawan bin Gofur. "We have a very strong conviction that this person carried the bomb and died in the explosion," Bachtiar told reporters. Nine other people were killed and more than 180 were injured in the Sept. 9 attack, which has been claimed in the al-Qaida-linked Jemaah Islamiyah group. *AFP*

EU immigrant camps

SCHEVENINGEN, Netherlands — European Union police and interior ministers on Friday weighed a controversial proposal to set up transit processing camps outside Europe — a project Germany said was necessary to weed out illegal immigrants from legitimate asylum seekers. German Interior Minister Otto Schily was outlining the proposal to create transit centers in North Africa and elsewhere on the region said. "We need to think about preventing illegal immigration more forcefully," Schily told reporters Thursday, but refused to elaborate on his proposal before briefing his colleagues. "We either can wait until the problems come to Europe ... or we go actively after the problems and try to solve them. I am for the latter." The debate over the camps dominated two days of talks on how European Union nations can cooperate to come up with common policies on immigration and asylum. *AP*

Docs examine Pinochet

SANTIAGO, Chile — Three court-appointed doctors examined Chile's former military dictator Augusto Pinochet on Thursday, a key step that will decide whether the 86-year-old general will stand trial for human rights abuses. The doctors' reports, due by Oct. 8, will assess Pinochet's mental health and will be used by an investigating judge to decide whether to indict him in one specific case. "The exams took place in the best way possible and with maximum transparency and we are waiting for the reports," Juan Guzman, a former right judge, told reporters. Guzman is probing Pinochet's role in 18 deaths in the 1970s under Operation Condor, an intelligence sharing network of South American military regimes who helped each other hunt down dissidents. *Reuters*

Russia delivers crucial nod to Kyoto

MOSCOW—The Russian government approved the Kyoto Protocol on Thursday, giving decisive support to the long-delayed climate change treaty that should allow it to come into force worldwide.

President Vladimir Putin's cabinet decided to send the 1997 UN pact to the State Duma lower house, dominated by Kremlin supporters, for ratification. Opponents maintained it would harm the economy and failed to protect the environment.

Western backers of Kyoto, which orders cuts in greenhouse gas emissions to slow global warming, made clear they believed it would have no effect on the environment or the economy and that the decision was politically motivated.

The European Union hailed Moscow's decision and urged the country to urge Washington, whose rejection of the pact in 2001 left it dependent on Russia's approval, to rethink its position.

"The fate of the Kyoto protocol depends on Russia. If we... rejected ratification, we would become the cave in Ukraine (for its failure)," Deputy Foreign Minister Yuri Fedotov told the Cabinet meeting.

A UN spokesperson said Secretary General Kofi Annan welcomed the Russian move and "takes this occasion to remind the entire international community of the need to bring a greater sense of urgency to this crucial issue of human security and well being."

Russia, which accounts for 17 percent of world emissions, has held the key to Kyoto's success since the US pulled out.

Kyoto becomes binding once it has been ratified by 55 percent of the signatories, which must altogether account for 55 percent of developed countries' carbon dioxide emissions.

The pact, so far ratified by 123 nations, has met the first condition, but they account for only 44 percent of emissions.

Russia initially procrastinated on ratification, but in May Putin backed it in exchange for EU agreement on the terms of Moscow's admission to the World Trade Organization.

"We warmly welcome the decision," a European Commission spokesperson said in Brussels. He added that the EU was encouraging Washington to review its attitude to the pact.

Environmentalists and experts were equally positive.

"Now he (Putin) can go down in history as the savior (of Kyoto)," said Brenda Mueller, an expert for British-based think tank the Royal Institute for International Affairs.

Thursday's meeting left unanswered the question of when parliament could practically debate ratification. The head of the Duma's international affairs committee, Konstantin Kosachev, suggested this was unlikely before the end of the year.

There is no time limit for the Cabinet to send a ratification request to the Duma. Interfax said ministries tasked to the environment had been given three months to work out practical measures arising from Russia's obligations.

Proponents of Kyoto say that apart from improving the environment worldwide, the pact would force Russia to upgrade industry to new standards and help it earn billions of dollars selling excess quotas for gas emissions to polluters abroad.

Opponents said Russia would lose out.

"The Academy of Sciences confirms its position that the protocol is not effective and gives us no advantages," the head of the academy's institute on climate change and ecology, Yuri Izrael, told the Cabinet meeting.

Putin's economic adviser Andrei Illarionov warned that new environmental standards would cost industry more and undermine the Kremlin's plan to double gross domestic product in 10 years.

"Many economic calculations show that if the protocol is ratified, the doubling of GDP becomes impossible in the next 10 years," Illarionov said.

But Economic Development Minister German Gref, Illarionov's rival for Putin's ear, said that when ranking the decision the Cabinet aimed at setting a good international precedent rather than focusing on economic or environmental concerns. Reuter's

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

ISSN 0116-2442 Vol. 19 No. 287

OPINION

Terrorism

EDITORIAL

EVEN since the gangland-style murder of Arturo Tolsura Sunday at the parking lot of Shoehiber Paintview, everyone from his friends and family to the police has been pointing at the New People's Army as his most likely executioner.

"The killing bore the signature of the NPA," one senior police official was saying. Police investigators noted that Tolsura's assassination was carried out with the same deadly efficiency as the earlier killings of Filemon Lagman and Romulo Kintanar. Like Tolsura, both were erstwhile top leaders of the Communist Party of the Philippines until they had a falling out with the rebel group. Another senior police officer said the evidence they had gathered indicated that Tolsura was killed by the same group of highly trained assassins that gunned down Kintanar, the former chief of the NPA, in January last year inside a restaurant located a couple of hundred meters from the Quezon City Hall.

Comrades of Tolsura accused exiled CPP founder Jose Maria Sison of ordering the killing. "Sons wants to silence dissenters," one of them said. Tolsura's wife Veronica said they had been warned that he was in the CPP-NPA's order of battle, which "meant they would punish him with death."

The NPA has not done anything to disabuse the public of such suspicion. Not only has it not denied the accusation, but its spokesperson Gregorio Rosal has admitted that an NPA unit had long been sent out to arrest Tolsura so that he could be tried before a "people's court" for numerous offenses "against the people of Negros and Panay and the revolutionary movement." Rosal theorized that Tolsura could have been shot to death when the NPA arresting unit resisted that he was "armed and dangerous."

Although Rosal has said he was still waiting for confirmation that the NPA made the hit, his vehement denunciation of Tolsura's alleged crimes against the people and the CPP already sounds like an admission of guilt. But this time the CPP leadership is no longer gloating. In contrast, Rosal coolly intends his gloe after the Kintanar killing, citing it as an example of "revolutionary justice." Then he boasted that "all traitors to the revolution cannot escape from retribution; sooner or later every traitor will pay for his blood debts to the people and the revolution."

Why the restraint and the seeming reluctance to admit responsibility for Tolsura's killing? Why the lame attempt to pass it off as an act of self-defense?

If there is anything the CPP leadership wants very badly, it is to have the terrorist tag withdrawn. That action taken by the United States government has not only cut off the pension and other privileges Sison had been getting from the Dutch government but also caused foreign fund contributions to the rebel movement to dry up.

The Tolsura killing obviously does not put them closer to that objective. For no matter what he did against the CPP cause, Tolsura could hardly be classified as a combatant.

Granted that Tolsura had served as a military spy even while he was in the CPP, as Rosal claimed, what about Stephen Ong? What blood debts had he accumulated? Is it now a crime against the people and the revolution to kill in love with a former comrade's daughter?

The 15-year-old Silliman University student was with Tolsura when he was shot to death. But his killers cannot claim he was an accidental victim or that his killing was in the nature of collateral damage. He took three bullets to Tolsura's own. That was not an accidental death. It was cold-blooded and brutal murder. It was a terrorist act.

Rosal and his comrades here and abroad know it. That is why they cannot come out and claim responsibility for the twin kill outright.

Coming chaos

FOREIGN COMMENT

AS the Antarctic ice is melting faster, rich countries, the only ones able to undertake effective measures, including the United States, maintain an attitude of indifference. The reason for this is the higher economic cost of rules for greenhouse gas emissions. It was because of this that the United States rejected the Kyoto Protocol.

Aquecimento global e a poluição atmosférica mundial

Pacific Ocean archipelago of Tuvalu, and because in Alaska both on the melting permafrost are beginning to crack. On big countries pour on rights as the above areas, but it is certain that chaos in the coming decades cannot be prevented if measures are undertaken now.

Even if the United States finally decides to sign the Kyoto Protocol, it will not be enough. Kyoto is already an insufficient answer to a problem many bigger than was framed.

O Globo (Rio de Janeiro, Brazil)

The folly of legislative investigations

SEPARATE OPINION

Raguindin S. Cruz

MIND that the new Congress has just formed its committee chairs aiming to favored members, one can expect them to start throwing off again in the exercise of their right of legislative investigation. This is now expressly limited by the Constitution, but that is not going to help. Only honest solon believe that this power is an opportunity for them to impress their constituents and the public in general. Many of them believe in their supposed abilities (supposed by them) as experts in every conceivable subject and the people should know about their talents ad nauseam.

The act of cross-examination is something that elicits even the most experienced lawyers as one of their demonstrated at the intricate impeachment trial when he used as much a witness is a lie. The witness was too clever for him, however, and it was he who screamed with his exposition in camera. This such humiliation does not intimidate our generation lawmakers, who believe that their election confers them to act infallible in the once sugar halls of Congress. Thus, you can expect them to ask the most stupid questions, and in the most pompous manner, to the hushed admiration of their baby-sit admirers.

I do not mean all the members of Congress in this observation, for there are indeed a goodly number of them who deserve the respect of the public. But they will constitute a small minority of the generally bumbling many that is a disgrace to the Filipino people. The trouble with the legislature is that all its members have an equal right to speak, even fatuities, and each of them may invoke parliamentary immunity to escape deserved punishment for his or her slanderous remarks. That language may be "unparliamentary," but they are the elect of the people whose voice is, in rare cases, to be heard and respected as the voice of God.

The power of legislative investigation used to be one of the most effective front-raising

"MOTHER knows best" is the synonymous wisdom when it comes to family matters. Those who, with the normal confidence of youth, thought that their mother knew just one inch and ignored their wishes. Those who would call it, generally end up wishing that they had paid a little more attention.

The government and the Catholic Church seem to be making the mistake that these noble, overconfident children made. They have been sounding members in particular, and women in general, as if they didn't have all their marbles or an idea to which those institutions have an comparative advantage as far as expertise or even hands-on experience is concerned. The side of their hands. And to those so anyone who looks at the figures that they have easier or regret their animals. Indeed, surely the two institutions seem to me time to be blind to their error, to the country's great loss.

Let's start with our population growth rates. From the 2000s up to 1990, population growth showed a (slowly) decelerating path, from 3.08 percent between 1960 and 1970, to 2.71 percent between 1970 and 1980, to 2.35 percent between 1980 and 1990. But between 1990 and 2000, the deceleration stopped. Population grew by 2.36 percent, or a roughly the same pace as in the previous decade. Compare this performance with our friends Korea, Thailand and Indonesia, which (like Hong Kong and Persia, in the Indonesian and Hillocks "The Philippine Economy: Development, Policies and Challenges") had similar high growth rates in the 1960s and 1970s, but had brought them down to 1.6 percent, 1.0 percent, and 1.3 percent, respectively, in the 1990s.

In the mid-1980s, it was said that the Philippines was employed in Asia because its performance was more in tune with Latin American countries (we were the only country in this part of the world with a debt crisis, which was being supervised by the whole of Latin America). Now, with respect to population structure, the Philippines looks like it is misplaced in Asia as well, in performance being more in line with that of Middle Eastern and North African countries (average population growth rate of 2.51 percent) than with those in East Asia and the Pacific (average 1.2 percent). It is not refreshing more like a low manner (average 2.1 percent, lower even than some developing country) than a middle-income developing country where it is classified (average 1.1 percent).

That our population growth rates did not decelerate in the 1990s—and there is no reason to believe that it has started decelerating in the current decade—clearly reflects the failure of our population policy (if any). As a result, the negative impacts of the remaining flood relief has been exacerbated, as illustrated by what is happening in education.

As a percentage of GDP, the budget for education has been increasing, from 2.9 percent in 2000 to 3.3 percent in 2004. The amount allocated has grown by a modest 4.6 percent, but it has been eaten up by inflation, so that in 2004, for education per, in real terms, actually contracted (a minimal growth rate of 2.9 percent, inflation rate of 4.6 percent, therefore real growth rate of 1.6). Such population growth, at the rate of 2.4 percent, that means that real per capita expenditures on education have contracted by 4 percent. Which is more immediate loss. Fewer books, equipment, classrooms, teachers, etc., the biggest loss being in overall quality of education—that the rate continues shrinking. The long-term implications on the quality of the labor force—and on their income-earning potential—are terrifying.

So, what do members and their mother have to do with all this? Well, the principal source of crime-spawning population of a high rate (the all-over (CFR), the number of illegitimate women. It was 6 births per woman in 1970, 5.1 in 1980, 4.1 in 1990, 3.7 in 1998, and 3.5 percent in 2003—figures which speak for themselves. Again, Philippine TFR is more similar to Middle East and North Africa (3.7 in 1997) than to East Asia and the Pacific (2.1).

But get this: While overall TFR in 1998 was 3.7, what the women wanted, as per the 2000 National Demographic and Health Survey, was 2.7. In other words, if the women had their druthers, they would rather have had one fewer child than they actually had. The 1998 survey results is the 2003 survey but just here (preliminary analysis) yet) showed that not only did half (51.4 percent) of women want no more children, but also that of the births in the five years preceding the survey more than one-fourth (26.9 percent) were not wanted at the time (the women would have preferred that they had been spaced further), and almost one-fifth (18.2 percent) were not wanted at all.

Has the government, has the Catholic Church (in a noteworthy that the women in the country have raised a female struggle exercising family planning, including both artificial and natural methods of contraception, focusing on the welfare of mothers and child.) Has science in the women? Obviously not. Not only is erratic, are the means for preventing or spacing pregnancies inaccessible to those women, but to add insult to injury the available methods cost those that are contraceptive are out of reach.

This is literally a deadly combination. Maternal mortality rates in the country are four times that of Thailand, and it is evidenced that almost one-third of those are abortion-related. Unwanted pregnancies lead to abortions in their own hands, because they get no attention or the wrong kind of attention.

Remember, mothers know best.

What women want

GET REAL

Sullite Collao-Monsod

Kerry won points in first round

Good start

Political Tidbits

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

I HEAR it was a fine match. I am up and wanted the play-by-play of three presidential debates between Democratic challenger George W. Bush and John Kerry. The debates received ground-hog and homeland security, two issues which most likely had spirited ahead in each's own polls with over 50 points before the debates began. This must have been somewhat like pitchers vs Bush, fun to the debate, Bush's camp seized rather strongly, planning to finish the war there, while Bush enthusiastically couldn't put a "deadline" on the duration of troops. In general, Bush, as he usually is, was on the defensive. But he tried to counter by repeatedly hammering on the campaign line that Kerry was indecisive and widely vacillating on the issues. Kerry countered that poll results are true. Our debate, but he'd say Kerry won points there. The next debate will be tougher for Bush who is lagging behind in the economic issue.

World oil prices rose to a record price $55.17 a barrel last Tuesday and sadly experts don't know or what price it would stabilize. As everyone knows, the world price of oil is affected by a number of events, as conflict or unrest in the key oil-producing countries. Some weeks back, a man the financial woes of Russia's largest oil company, Yukos, that sent prices soaring. This was followed by the strife in Nigeria, which has cut off 800,000 of the millions it pumps there, and the political instabilities of the rule of President Hugo Chavez in Venezuela. Last Tuesday's record price was attributed to a Nigerian rebel group's demand for a greater share of oil production. The rebels' recent assistance to the disruption of oil production, which, in turn, leads to higher prices.

A spokesperson of an energy research group abroad was quoted as saying, "The market is much tighter today than it's been since 1973 when the oil crisis first emerged, unlike in 1981, 1979 or 1990. But the market today is going through unchartered territory as production slows."

Obviously this dramatic shock comes from newly industrialized countries such as China and India, which aggravated the traditional high demand at this time for winter stock piling in the temperate countries. But the spokesperson also said something both revealing and alarming for small countries in Asia such as the Philippines (our oil consumption here up to between 300,000 and 350,000 barrels a day), whom economists could suffer sharp economic growth rate if the rise in oil prices were to be sustained. "The market is not thinking long term," he said. "It's thinking day to day." Meaning, might it be prudent on the potentially destabilizing events in the oil-producing nations, and there seems to be a new one each day.

* * *

Health Secretary Manuel Dayrit called upon to thank this columnist for taking up the cudgels for him against Thai Sen. Marisal Sereemitya, who had castigated him and the Aseyo administration for "failure" to stop the SARS virus' continuous re-entries in the spread of AIDS and the burgeoning population. I said Sereemitya ought to get home and confront the real life situation in his country, where the president campaign appeared to have run amok spend over three presidential. Over a million people are infected on by HIV positive in Thailand, a situation that has alarmed the World Health Organization.

Dayrit stressed that each culture has to be considered. If the massive distribution of condoms works well for Thailand, as Sereemitya points it to be, in the Dayrit said, such an approach cannot be effective as it's too direct and could go against religious sensibilities. What will work better for our people, he opined, is a multi-pronged, multi-agency information and education campaign not just about AIDS but also other diseases such as TB, measles, etc. as the campaign level. Dayrit said the Department of Health has been doing this and will push it even more. He recalled that he marked it at the European Union lunch in the late 1970s as a fresh medical graduate and he's confident he knows it pretty well.

* * *

The worst cases of killings of Filipino journalists has caught the attention of international media groups. One of them, the Asia Pacific desk of the Paris-based Reporters Sans Frontieres (Reporters Without Boundaries) opined through its chief, Vincent Brossel, that the murders could be linked to the Philippine political system. Brossel was quoted as saying, "Corruption and the use of violence are an intimate part of the political game and culture. Local leaders are sometimes linked to the Mafia groups, so they are ready to use the same intimidation techniques." Brossel recommended that Manila strengthen the police and give enough resources to the justice department so it independent, fair and efficient. Good suggestion.

* * *

An earlier item here related that during the latter part of the Monday Mountain hearing where former President Fidel Ramos testified, Sen. Miriam Defensor Santiago was "absent" from a media person, informing her of the deadline for entries. She was dead most hearing the room and I quoted someone else's observation that she "discovered than exit lines a stallion." John Paul Soren, a reader of Santiago's staff, denied this, asserting that it was her staff that raised an inquiry with her. He also said the senator's husband, Jun Santiago, was there to support her while her secretary was on the media center, and that she left the hearing "because she knew that she would not be getting answers from Mr. Ramos (reference to the senate report)." Soren said DVR were "unfortunately" not available because of the legal questions posed by senators present at the hearing. Thus the media. Refused to follow ("hostage") was mentioned."

A wholesale slander

At Large

Rina Jimenez-David

TWO& natural family planning to save and, obviously, money.

Take it from a friend who married quite late: some seven years after her last pregnancy. "We have two college degrees and a modest of four children to support," she said in exasperation recently, over which point their staff had sprouted about to say: "Are you guilty with over 50 points? Where do you have the time? This must has been somewhere Cory pulled out Bush, late in the debate, Bush's camp seized rather strongly, planning to finish the war there, while Bush enthusiastically couldn't put a "deadline" on the duration of troops. In general, Bush, as he usually is, was on the defensive. But he tried to counter by repeatedly hammering on the campaign line that Kerry was indecisive and widely vacillating on the issues. Kerry countered that poll results are true. Our debate, but he'd say Kerry won points there. The next debate will be tougher for Bush who is lagging behind in the economic issue.

World oil prices rose to a record price $55.17 a barrel last Tuesday and sadly experts don't know or what price it would stabilize. As everyone knows, the world price of oil is affected by a number of events, as conflict or unrest in the key oil-producing countries. Some weeks back, a man the financial woes of Russia's largest oil company, Yukos, that sent prices soaring. This was followed by the strife in Nigeria, which has cut off 800,000 of the millions it pumps there, and the political instabilities of the rule of President Hugo Chavez in Venezuela. Last Tuesday's record price was attributed to a Nigerian rebel group's demand for a greater share of oil production. The rebels' recent assistance to the disruption of oil production, which, in turn, leads to higher prices.

A spokesperson of an energy research group abroad was quoted as saying, "The market is much tighter today than it's been since 1973 when the oil crisis first emerged, unlike in 1981, 1979 or 1990. But the market today is going through unchartered territory as production slows."

Obviously this dramatic shock comes from newly industrialized countries such as China and India, which aggravated the traditional high de-

sounds day and were willing to risk...or perhaps just willing to push on the back of their minds...the possibility of pregnancy.

Here's what the "FAQ" has to say about couples who practice NFP. These couples, it says, "are thoroughly committed, emotionally and physically, to living with each other because they do not call for frequent change or loss of self-esteem, not fear of the decline of the married state once they are married. It is clearly the opposite of the contraceptive mentality [which] has been known to encompass the use of contraceptives or sterilization."

On what were these assertions based? Certainly, couples mentioned in our NFP round-up say they are "tested, comfortable and satisfied" with the way they're using the method. But how was the comparison made with couples using other modern methods? Judging from my own experience, and the experience of friends who use NFP, precisely because determining an "unsafe" day depends so much on one's temperature or other anthropomorphic signs, would tend to cause more anxiety, tension and resentment than other contraceptive methods.

And what proof does the Department of Health have that couples practicing NFP are more faithful or remain close than using only one method or another? Is there a way to check with his sister, for instance, that no days of abstinence her husband does not seek solace in the arms of another?

* * *

FERTILITY awareness partners and demonstrated the method of family planning you are "first writing you will not be qualified for periodic abstinence." And if you're the jealous, possessive type, you'd suspect your spouse of philandering even if he's a member of Couples for Christ. Or you'd need to undergo periodic pregnancy tests to assure yourself that your husband is not playing around.

Logic would tell us that a couple for whom the fear of pregnancy is specifically the use of a safe, reliable and convenient method and are thus more freely able to express their love and desire for each other are more likely to have a healthier sex life and relationship than if they worried about the possibility of pregnancy each time they have sex.

Logic would tell us that a family that is of the "right" size—according to the couple's choice and desire, which may change from time to time—is a family more likely to enjoy a healthier level of well-being, the amount of time, effort and loving they can put into child rearing—would be a happier, healthier, more loving family.

And logic would tell us that if a method of family planning can be unanswerable to "most women"—that is, it has been scientifically tested and proven to be safe and effective...[only 60% moved to the chart to be explained on its own terms, and not in relation to any other method] and is readily available and very easy to use, then other methods have to be accepted.

* * *

If this is so, why do NFP counselors, some of whom are on the DOH's payroll, rely so much on subjective and even emotional factors when evaluating family planning methods as they try to convince them to try NFP? Is it because they know that, once a couple have tested safer methods and found them currently and successfully, they would realize just how unreliable, unpredictable and messy even "modern" NFP can be?

Or maybe that's precisely what NFP promoters don't want couples to find out: that a method of family planning that requires no other medical intervention but is also so easy and convenient. They make returning sex without fear of pregnancy too easy. Unless we think of it, perhaps it's not the "artifice" in the methods that they dislike so much as the fact that they're taking charge of their sex life. It is all right—as long as it's wrapped in guilt and fear, inconvenience and uncertainty. Easy and enjoyable sex, now that's the real sin.

Nicole Mattoza R. Jolluta, 18, a psychology sophomore at the Chulalongkorn Philippines, Diliman.

To give or not to give

Divine Mae Pulgencio

ON MY way to Divisoria to see someone one day I got caught in a traffic jam. It was really annoying, imagine all the smoke and the clutter of impatient drivers and the kids. We were just there waiting, when suddenly a young boy in tattered clothes got on the jeepney and started to wipe the passengers' shoes with a rag. When the jeepney was about to move, the boy reminded his left and so said a gesture of begging.

I was really touched when I saw the boy. He looked pale and he was just pitiful. His eyes reflected the hunger that was slowly killing his young body in his age and in his condition, he should not have been out in the streets.

When he reminded a trembling hand to me, my eyes burst and was already ready to give him money. But I changed my mind, spoke up and said, "Don't give alms to those kids. We are spoiling their parents. The parents of those kids are probably just playing cards in their homes or sleeping while their wards hustle. Do not give money to them."

I was torn between giving the money to the PO cute/vacationing and following the economists advice. She seemed to be sure about what she was saying. I had just come from the provinces. Although I read newspapers and watch television, my knowledge regarding child labor was not good enough to enable me to make a quick decision.

Now let me tell you why I'm writing. I will never forget the incident. I already know that when the moment will soon begin's course. I know that there are parents who are so busy they just let their children do the responsibilities of providing for the family. If there have also realize that many of those kids work while studying. I know that they are really trying to end up in the pockets of people who are criminally inclined.

But every time I remember how the boy looked that day and how I turned him away, I will feel guilty. I wonder what has happened to the boy. Did his parents setup him when he came home yesterday? Is he still alive today? If he is, is he living a hard life? I hope not.

I live in a relatively lavish an exclusive school for girls. I do not go out that much—just once every month. But almost every time I take a jeepney, a child would come up to me begging for whatever I am willing to give. And still I am not sure whether I should give or not. I am still in search for the answer.

Such encounters are, of course, quite ordinary but while the texts literature among to see their work their still pictures or buying "Ukay" stuff, perhaps we should take time to think about the children who are trying to make a living in the streets. Their number seems to be growing. What can we do to help them?

Look around and see these kids going around and knocking at the windows of cars even in traffic to them hope for their lucre!

Reina Mae Pulgencio, 18, is a religious education sophomore at St. Paul University.

The INQUIRER is a member of the
PHILIPPINE PRESS INSTITUTE
The National Association of Philippine Newspapers

Like lemmings to the sea

Sense and Sensibility

Ramon L. Bautista

LET us begin by saying that the current political unrest, dirty is understood, is more than P1.4 billion and that the present situation is not merely a spasmodic one or even has merely one cause.

Having said that, perhaps one for asking a couple of rudimentary questions, for everyone's saying, there, as perhaps it should run into ask them. The first is, why is the national economy unable to provide gainful employment for the hundreds of thousands of graduates their own selves on a note rise? The economy, as is usually necessary given the need to lead by example, for the Presidents to amend the Senate's wedding vows to "for richer and richer" and "for richer and richer" Mother Nature supposedly bestowing P12 trillion from the USSR, the agency which he may not be aware of, the Philippines is "richer in natural resources" than most? The fourth is, why did the Senate have to investigate the female "mistress" whose phones landed on the front pages? The last one, we take it, is not of legislative skill. Sen. Lobo Loyola supposedly "sitting on" the Senate's "Committee on Women" from the fourth? The benefit of not having that is, "how much for sale is?" I mean, that's really relevant and it should help in more foreign investments and tourist arrivals. Of course, the greatest mystery remains unsung themselves because they haven't any answers to the problems? Is there a national crisis or is the criticality for the common man?

I happened to pick up a copy of the Sept. 27 issue of Time magazine. Whereupon what's that I claim that the new financial Director, Pudong, there on what was translated 21 years ago. This year alone, $12 billion in concerned foreign direct investments is expected, nearly 10 times that in 1995. From 1995 to 2003, 18,000 foreign companies have set up shop in Pudong. I would perhaps be more sympathetic in the house if they had discussed why investors aren't breaking down our doors to start creating those badly needed jobs for the 11 million unemployed Filipinos, are so interested in the underemployed. Isn't anyone worried if we aren't doing something wrong? If so what can we do to remedy the situation? Or is it not just us, merely the symptoms of the hopeless conditions to control the spread of AIDS and the burgeoning population. I said Sereemitya ought to get home and confront the real life situation in his country, where the president campaign appeared to have run amok spend over three presidential. Over a million people are infected on by HIV positive in Thailand, a situation that has alarmed the World Health Organization.

Dayrit stressed that each culture has to be considered. If the massive distribution of condoms works well for Thailand, as Sereemitya points it to be, in the Dayrit said, such an approach cannot be effective as it's too direct and could go against religious sensibilities. What will work better for our people, he opined, is a multi-pronged, multi-agency information and education campaign not just about AIDS but also other diseases such as TB, measles, etc. as the campaign level. Dayrit said the Department of Health has been doing this and will push it even more. He recalled that he marked it at the European Union lunch in the late 1970s as a fresh medical graduate and he's confident he knows it pretty well.

* * *

The worst cases of killings of Filipino journalists has caught the attention of international media groups. One of them, the Asia Pacific desk of the Paris-based Reporters Sans Frontieres (Reporters Without Boundaries) opined through its chief, Vincent Brossel, that the murders could be linked to the Philippine political system. Brossel was quoted as saying, "Corruption and the use of violence are an intimate part of the political game and culture. Local leaders are sometimes linked to the Mafia groups, so they are ready to use the same intimidation techniques." Brossel recommended that Manila strengthen the police and give enough resources to the justice department so it independent, fair and efficient. Good suggestion.

* * *

An earlier item here related that during the latter part of the Monday Mountain hearing where former President Fidel Ramos testified, Sen. Miriam Defensor Santiago was "absent" from a media person, informing her of the deadline for entries. She was dead most hearing the room and I quoted someone else's observation that she "discovered than exit lines a stallion." John Paul Soren, a reader of Santiago's staff, denied this, asserting that it was her staff that raised an inquiry with her. He also said the senator's husband, Jun Santiago, was there to support her while her secretary was on the media center, and that she left the hearing "because she knew that she would not be getting answers from Mr. Ramos (reference to the senate report)." Soren said DVR were "unfortunately" not available because of the legal questions posed by senators present at the hearing. Thus the media. Refused to follow ("hostage") was mentioned."

A clear indication of a serious moral crisis

POPE John Paul II said that terrorism is and always will be a show of brawny audacity—precisely for this reason—it will never be able to solve conflicts among human beings. Only reason and love are the valid means of expressing and resolving disputes between people. No situation of injustice, no feeling of frustration, no philosophy or religion can justify such an alternative.

The explosion of violent incidents are **are witnessing around the world** is the result of scandalous injustices and intolerants that create the climate for unbridled revenge. When fundamental rights are violated, it is easy to fall prey to temptations of hatred and violence. Sometimes, we must keep in check our base impulses and together work to build a global culture of solidarity that restores hope to the future to all peoples, especially the young.

I am thinking not only of economic measures but also of the least which, under the guise of justice, violate the fundamental rights of individuals (e.g., the unborn) and the rapid through abortion, genetic manipulation and euthanasia). Such laws do not lead to freedom; they are rather savagery for oppression. They assault not moral possibilities, leading us calmly unaware to corruption.

To attain, for example, the right to abortion, to co-recognize that right in law means to give human freedom a perverse and evil significance: an absolute power over others and against others.

Many expressed doubt over the recent massacre of innocent children in Russia, but few were concerned that millions more of children—the most innocent of innocents...are being fatefully killed each day through abortion in hospitals and clinics around the globe...and in the most gruesome manner.

This is because, today, in many people's consciences, the evidence of abortion has become progressively obscured. The acceptance of abortion in the popular mind, in behavior and in law itself is a telling sign of an extremely dangerous crisis of the moral sense, which is becoming more and more incapable of distinguishing between good and evil, even when the fundamental right to life is at stake.

Even such a grave situation, we need, now more than ever, to have the courage to look the truth in the eye and to call things by their proper names, without yielding to convenient compromises or to the temptation of self-deception.

—PAUL ARMIDA,
234 Columbia Drive,
Hamilton, Ontario, Canada

LETTERS

What will it take to solve the fiscal crisis?

I AM a simple housewife and, just like every Filipino, I am very much concerned about the present state of our nation.

Need we experience a catastrophe before we can unite and work together in the spirit of cooperation?

I work before the time of a Ramadhan Fund was raised. I asked my husband if it were possible to solve our financial crisis through a fund drive of some sort. The thought came to my mind testing people's willingness to share unlending with the nations in times of calamities. He gave a negative answer, saying our dollar are just far too high. He even opined that what we need is a war so as to bring down the enormously growing population and, perhaps, eventually bring about change of mindset.

Terrorists are now pouring in from all corners per what we are hearing and even among the citizens as to how those destructions will be put to use. So, may I call the attention of government people, to access your mentality quotient to turn fear and poisoned mind kind of heart notwithstanding.

Grab money because members, somewhere, someone committed a blunder, a mistake. In the one country those mistakes come in the form of graft and corruption, crimes about and abuse of resources, incompetent people and abuse of power, in every government, those mess ever present. Poorer and seemingly do agree is an issue to overcome temptation. Person saying our government is completely corrupt. There are still some good men in there.

We are, indeed, in a time of crisis and we have to deal with it. Says it and think of possible solutions and implement them after feasible. But why is it that instead of cooperating with each other, we keep on pointing to accusing finger at each other? That solves nothing and only cause further animosity and hate upon, triggering more charges and counter-charges.

I came across these lines somewhere and, perhaps, we should bear them in mind. "If things have gone awry, let not part of us get accusing finger. Who is to blame is not important, only how shall we set the situation right."

So, once again, let me ask the question: Need we experience a catastrophe before we learn to live and work together in the spirit of cooperation?

—MARILOU C. SOR,
alicesoler@mail.com.ph

How to bail out GMA from the fiscal crisis

THE NOTE of how President Macapagal-Arroyo smiles these days. I wonder how a national leader can flash such smile in the face of the clumsiness begging for financial help to save our country's economy.

With the present state of the nation, the President should look composed but not proud and happy. He she has nothing to be proud and happy about but administration's loans which are made big guy what she considered borrowings during the Ramos and Erap days.

One can't help thinking now that she borrowed a lot of money to make it appear that her economic governance was doing well in order to get ahead in the pre-election campaign game, if not to provide rich entertainers for the rank-and-file in her campaign for the presidency. If her massive borrowings are consumed to the extent we are in, she aggravates the offense and makes it doubly hateful by bailing out on our sinking homage under threat of economic death. If we don't agree to bail her out of her own crime by paying new taxes.

The nation is caught between the devil and the deep blue sea. With the unresolved questions on her alleged cheating to win the 2004 elections, the expulsion of the Mr. executive of COMC officials and her controversial appointments; I am appalled that this administration has the gall to offer us a dreadful, bitter pill to bring us out of the fiscal crisis.

—ADE BAUTISTA,
1081 E Bataan St.,
Caloocan City

Age does matter

THERE in our country people who reach the age of 35 and above are and grown equal job opportunities. You'll notice that when you look at the classified ads section of the newspapers. Employers are very particular about age limit.

This is the reason why cheap labor is flourishing in our country and why many degree holders are unemployed. Also, that is one of the main reasons why our skilled laborers are forced to find jobs abroad.

Those in the 35-and-above age group are the ones most affected by the economic crisis; they have children they must feed and send to school, never mind the high cost of education. In other countries, every person has an equal chance of getting a job. Lawmakers should pass a law to protect a person from being discriminated because of age.

We must see senior-minded people just because of their age. As long as they are capable, they must be given a chance to prove their worth.

—CYRENE M. SOON,
cyi_99@yahoo.com

Cleaning the movie houses

THIS is in reaction to the laudable move of MI not to show sex films in its chain of theaters.

As parents, we are deeply grateful for being spared the embarrassment of having to shield our children from watching the sexual scenes of sex films when we bring them to see children's movies.

We need to keep our sense of wonder which oftentimes is evoked by our movies. Despite the say that after watching those "dirty" movies, they do feel "dirty," we should not complain...more because showing sex films are indeed direct than those showing quality movies. It's time, perhaps, to ask the cleaners!

Thanks the Ayalas and Gokongwei! Let us try even just for one year: ban sex films and violent films from our cinemas.

Filipinos are impressionable. Amoda Nguyen-Reyes and others can pocketbook till half frozen over, but the reality is that Filipinos are great imitators. They want to be led to follow good examples, and they want to become the persons they show out in the movies, television, etc.

—MA. CHRISTINA LIM,
98 Mirabel Pilar St.,
New Grace Park, Caloocan City

Non-transparent, corrupt, dishonest

THE ROW between Solicitor Antonio and Miss Bolivar is just the tip of the iceberg. I think it is a reflection of problems in Philippine media and politics.

The debate is not whether citizens have the right or right to attacks or not. For the politicians and big businesses, the issue is not if how to control businesses from attacks and assaults from fellow politicians or they all violate right to win the national conflicts.

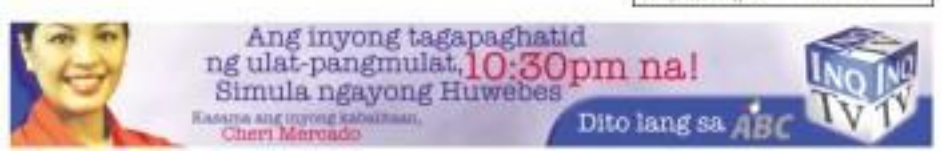
I think the Philippine press is not independent because:

- It is being used as a politician and lobby tool for politicians and big business.
- It is owned by vested interest.
- It mirrors the mindsets of Philippine politics which is non-transparent, corrupt and dishonest.

—TESSA ARENARES,
1 Ha Irish, Hampton Hallow,
Hertford, HRT 4LL
Hertfordshire, UK

If you have any complaints, grievances or suggestions about the treatment of news and photos in the Inquirer, you may write in the Readers' Advocate, Philippine Daily Inquirer, Chino Roces Avenue, corner Yague and Mascardo Streets, City of Makati or send a fax to this 897-4702, 897-4794, or e-mail readersadvocate@inquirer.com.ph

Writers of letters to the editor are requested to include their complete address and telephone or pager number or e-mail address for verification purposes. The Inquirer will not publish any letter unless such information is supplied.



Across the NATION

GMA cancels northern Cebu trip as weather turns bad during visit

By Jaime B. Balanban
INQ Visayas Bureau

CEBU CITY—President Macapagal-Arroyo was forced yesterday to cancel her trip to the northernmost part of Cebu due to heavy torrential rains brought by the intertropical convergence zone.

The President was scheduled to inaugurate the Bogo Central Terminal yesterday together with Transportation Secretary Leandro Mendoza. After which, she was to motor to Hagnaya, in the neighboring San Remigio town, for another inauguration there.

About 200 residents of Bogo town, 107 km from Cebu City, were dispersed when Mayor Celestino Martinez III announced the bad news.

Saul Paa, senior official of the Media Accreditation and Relations Office (Mare), yesterday said the President was on board the presidential helicopter from the southernmost town of Medellin bound for Bogo when the pilot decided to not to proceed due to heavy rains and zero visibility and instead headed for Mactan Island.

Arroyo was staying at the Shangri-la Beach Resort in Mactan, some 82 km south of Cebu City, during her three-day visit to Cebu.

She said President Arroyo was on board a NELLS 412 chopper that departed from Medellin at 10:45 a.m. yesterday. She was scheduled to arrive at 11:45 a.m. in Bogo.

Mare officials said the President's helicopter headed to the Mactan-Benito Ebuen Airbase where she boarded her presidential plane that brought her and her party to Davao City, where she was scheduled to speak at the convention of the Mindanao Rapid Development Council and to leave immediately.

Martinez said he was disappointed that the President was not able to come, especially since town officials and residents had prepared for the event.

WALLS
A worker arranges native walling materials in Tacurong, Sultan Kudarat, one of the products that the town is proud of.

10 solons hold low key talks with MILF rebs

COTABATO CITY—At least 10 congressmen held a low-profile meeting with leaders of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) in an undisclosed town in Maguindanao on Thursday where they discussed several issues in connection with the Moro rebellion.

Maguindanao Rep. Simeon Datumanong, who led the House team announced by Speaker Jose de Venecia, on Friday described the meeting with MILF Chair Murad Ebrahim and other rebel leaders as "intimate and cordial."

"We were there not as negotiators but facilitators to help foster better understanding with the MILF leadership on the issues surrounding the peace process," Datumanong said.

Most of the legislators who attended the meeting could be considered veterans of the peace process with Moro rebels with some of them playing key roles in the signing of the 1996 peace agreement with the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF).

The MILF is a breakaway faction of the MNLF and was not involved in their negotiations that led to the signing of the 1996 peace treaty.

"We have done this before with the MNLF and we want this process duplicated by the government to its peace deal with the MILF," Datumanong said.

Desire

Datumanong said that during the meeting, the MILF leaders told them that the rebel group also wanted an end to the long-lasting Moro rebellion.

"Just like the government, the MILF wants the Mindanao conflict resolved sooner," Datumanong quoted Ebrahim as saying.

The government and the MILF have been talking for the past five years in a bid to end the rebellion.

The formal peace talks have been suspended for quite sometime now but low-key negotiations have been continuing, with Malaysia acting as third-country mediator.

The progress of the peace talks was hampered by several issues, including allegations the MILF has ties with the regional terror group Jemaah Islamiyah.

The MILF repeatedly denied the allegations and even asked the government and even foreign governments to come and visit its camps.

However, a police intelligence officer told the Inquirer in Kidapawan City that during an MILF assembly in Maguindanao on Aug. 27, Ebrahim had ordered field commanders to "confine" 11 members in a secluded island in Lanao del Sur."

Hidden asset

The police intelligence officer, who requested anonymity, said this was an obvious move to prevent other parties from seeing the 11 operatives, most of them Indonesians, if a visit to an MILF camp had been agreed upon.

"This just reaffirmed reports that they have links with the terrorists," he said.

MILF spokesperson Eid Kabalu said the claim was an exaggeration of what actually took place during the assembly.

"Oh my God . . . that is not true. What the chairman told us was to always keep the guard (sic) against the ill and not to confine them or protect them or anything like that," Kabalu said.

He said the MILF has not resumed the break claim because "our ceasefire agreement is the one (in force) with the government."

The peace negotiation was expected to resume after Oct. 14 when the Malaysian-led ceasefire monitoring team had already been organized.

Peace advocates in Mindanao said they were already impatient with the long delays and urged both the government and the rebel group to speed up the resumption of the negotiations.

Mary Ann Arnado of the Mindanao Peoples Caucus said they are anxious and impatient because of fear that with the ensuing issues against the MILF, the formal negotiations would again be jeopardized.

"As Mindanaoans and peace advocates, we strongly urge the Philippine government, the MILF and the government of Malaysia to resume the peace talks as soon as possible," Arnado said. Charlie Señase and Jeffrey Tupas, PDI Mindanao Bureau

Spending for groceries? Household needs? Use your JCB credit card to shop and pay for the bills and spend quality time with your family, too!

GET A CHANCE TO WIN A TRIP FOR FIVE TO BORACAY OR SUBIC.

Hagedorn leads squad to Taekwon team

MANILA Mayor Lito Atienda congratulates Puerto Princesa City's squad Taekwon team for helping the Philippines to a third place finish overall in the South Eastern Indonesia Malaysia Philippines East Asian Growth Area Friendship Games in Kota Kinabalu, Malaysia. The Puerto Princesa team is composed of athletes Jojo Hernan Pearl Alexis, Jamie Cooley and Rafli Sagarga.

SPORTS

Three shoot for WNCAA semis

NAG Laguna fights valiantly for the last two semifinal slots in the WNCAA basketball tournament at the St. Scholastica's College gym. Pilak Technological's battles semifinalist Lyceum at 10:30 a.m., seeking a win that would give them the third slot. At 1 p.m., Centro Escolar University (5-2) will have the chance to settle the Bonnetti's victory over Mapua College (5-3).

TIGER Woods, who injured his back after sleeping awkwardly in his private plane, grimaces as he plays out of the rough. AP

Hurting Tiger trails by 2

DUBLIN, Ireland—Tiger Woods hardly looked like himself until a painful first round at the American Express Championship was over and he signed for a 4-under 68, two shots out of the lead at a tournament he has won the last two years.

On the practice range, he swung like an amateur getting ready for a Wednesday pro-am round on the PGA Tour.

Needless to say, a back injury that made him wince, grit his teeth, buckle his knees and generally look miserable.

British Open champion Padraig Harrington, who took the lead with a 6-under 66 and heard the stories about Woods' injury, chalked it up to something else.

"Even if the guy is healthy as an ox, he's got a big beast," Harrington said. "The guy never gives up."

Harrington has a chance to win three straight British Open titles, what really helped him Thursday was a few putts, which can feel like a magic wand on the good greens of Ireland's links.

Harrington made birdie putts of 20 and 15 feet early in his round, then finished it by eagling his ninth hole with a 30-foot putt. He made five straight birdies, and even his bad bogey on the final hole didn't keep him out of the lead.

"The putter felt good the whole day," he said. "If you can't putt these greens, you can't putt, because the greens are spectacular."

Hamilton wasn't alone.

Adam Scott recovered from a three-putt from 3½ feet—including one of 16 inches—for a double bogey on No. 11 by making birdie on five of his last six holes for 69.

Also one shot behind was the winning Ryder Cup trio of Sergio Garcia, Luke Donald and Miguel Angel Jimenez, along with Scott Gardner and Steve Flesch.

Woods' injury is in his upper back, although he seems to be the not pitching properly, and he often doesn't hit full turn over his chest at the ball swing. AP

ROGER Federer serves to Robin Soderling in the first set... REUTERS

Federer, Roddick advance

BANGKOK, Thailand—Top-seeded Roger Federer trounced Swiss compatriot Yves Allegro, 6-1, 6-0, Thursday and cruised into the Thailand Open quarterfinals.

Second-seeded Andy Roddick also advanced after rallying to move past fellow American Jeff Morrison, 6-2, 6-7 (4), 6-4.

Federer finished the first set in just 20 minutes, but struggled a little in the second and needed four match points to win the match.

"He hung in there, and after 6-1, it was the toughest game in the match," said Federer, who won three of four Grand Slam titles this year.

Allegro missed the match with a sore tooth, a condition Federer sympathized.

"I knew he was not 100 percent and I knew I could take advantage of that," Federer said. "He must be 100 percent to beat me."

After losing the second set, Roddick got a break in the deciding set and went on to lead 5-4. But it wasn't until the seventh match point that he was able to seal the tight match with a forehand winner.

"I missed easy shots and missed easy points," Roddick acknowledged in responses afterward.

He next faces Thomas Johansson of Sweden, who beat Chile's Adrian Garcia, 6-3, 6-3.

Marat Safin looked his opponent Radek Stepanek with a hard fought 6-3, 6-4 win over the Czech Republic's No1 ranked.

Fourth-seeded Jonathan Stephenson, the hometown favorite, was the last player to reach the quarterfinal with a 6-0, 7-6 (3) victory over American Alex Bogomolov Jr. AP

Rodman eyes comeback; Fox calls it quits

DENVER—Former NBA rebounding champion Dennis Rodman's attempt at a comeback at age 48 took another step when he participated in an informal workout with the Denver Nuggets on Thursday.

"Talk to other players and they'll say that wasn't a 48-year-old guy that was running today," Rodman told the Rocky Mountain News. "That wasn't a 45-year-old guy. That was a freak out there."

Meanwhile in Los Angeles, Rick Fox retired on Thursday and ended a 13-year stint never dying, which he won part of three NBA championship rings with the Los Angeles Lakers.

Fox, hurt by injuries last season, was traded by the Lakers to the Celtics on Aug. 6.

The 33-year-old forward averaged a career-low 4.8 points last season, when the Lakers were beaten by Boston in the NBA finals. AP

PRECIOUS TIME
A soldier takes a nap as he rides in a bicycle in a busy town in Bongao, Tawi-Tawi.

PAPUA NEW GUINEA STRIKE

Fishing boat mutineers charged; 10 of 12 nabbed

By Agudes Zonio
PDI Mindanao Bureau

GENERAL SANTOS CITY—Twelve of the more than 200 fishing workers here, who staged a mutiny against their employer by seizing company-owned fishing boats in Papua New Guinea last month, were charged in a local court.

The filing of the charges was only discovered when police encountered several assistants named by the court.

Earlier, the Fil-Tuna Workers Inc., the fishermen's employer, was reported to be pledging to a delegate brokered by the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) that the mutineers would not be used anymore.

On Wednesday, police here confronted a woman against the 12 fishermen but only managed to arrest 10 of them.

Roger Villarosa, 42, a boat captain and one of the arrested mutineers, decried the charges.

He said they were made to believe that the case had been already

During the mutiny, Villarosa and his companions demanded that they be paid according to standards set by the International Labor Organization (ILO) and that their should be treated humanely.

They refused to release several company-owned vessels until their demands had been met.

At the height of the mutiny, the management of FIJI Ventures said it would sue the workers because the company was allegedly losing about $100,000 per day because of the protest.

Customs men foil attempt to smuggle ₱2M in machines

By Bilal Mikalusha
PDI General Luzon Desk

SUBIC BAY FREEPORT ZONE—Bureau of Customs personnel here stymied in its war against smuggling on Wednesday after they stopped an attempt to ship out of this freeport zone 40 packages of used machines and parts worth more than P2 million.

Reports said BoC agents, armed with a warrant of seizure and detention issued by Subic District collector Ansel Abaran, stopped six container vans and trucks at the freeport's Tipo Gate containing the undeclared packages.

Abaran said the real value of the items, mostly machines used in the production of electronic parts and components, were not declared in the shipping manifest.

He said BoC operatives seized the goods for alleged technical smuggling and misdeclaration of cargo.

The 40 packages were loaded into the truck and container vans whose cargo was declared at a gross weight of 2,887 kilograms.

"The nature of the articles was misstated by the Taci Bat (the declared gross weight of the articles, which was 2,887 kg, would be hardly enough to (fit into) the trucks and containers vans used in transporting the items)," Abaran said.

The machines arrived at the port of Subic in 1999 and were consigned to Winton Infosun, a Subic-based company. It had a declared value of more than P2 million.

On Sept. 23 this year, Winton sold these to PASG,000 to-fit & Colorado Interindustrial, a firm based in Sta. Rosa, Laguna, through a negotiated sale. The shipment was assessed P28,110 in duties and taxes.

Abaran said BoC officials would file charges of violations of Section 1500 of the Tariff and Customs Code of the Philippines against E & C Zenaki International, the shipment's consignee.

Bukas na 'to!

Halina't maglaro at manalo sa...

BINGO BONANZA'S BENEFIT BINGO!

In collaboration with

Oasis of Love

Philippine Foundation for the Rehabilitation of the Disabled

OCTOBER TO REMEMBER

A Bingo Special for Special People

win 3 Cars and P1 Million grand prize

OCTOBER 3, 2004, SUNDAY, 1:00 PM

TICKET PRICE: P1,000.00

Bingo Bonanza

Cops nab couple in pyramid racket

CAMP SIMEON OLA, Legazpi City—A couple allegedly involved in an investment scam was arrested by police pointing an unlicensed firearm and ammunition Wednesday in their van.

In a report to this camp, Chief Insp. Melo dela of the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group in Camarines Sur identified the suspects as Melchor Fuentes Ibarde and his wife Lawyer Rowena Mercurio Ibarde.

Accordingly Ibarde, Melchor told police he was the executive publisher of tabloid, Tell Tonite and the executive vice president for administration of the Mass Management Group (MMG) based in Bicutan, Taguig City. Rowena initially introduced herself as Lee Gregorio and confessed to be a former officer of MMG.

The couple was first sighted at Victorias, Camarines Sur to and later intercepted at Barangay Poblacion, Sta. Elena of the same province where they were caught in possession of an unlicensed .45 cal. pistol and live ammunition.

CIDG records said the Ibarde couple was subject of a warrant of arrest for estafa issued by Judge Bonifacio Sanz Maceda of RTC Branch 271, with no bail recommended.

Romeo Lovjo, South correspondent

Back by popular demand! CEBU PACIFIC'S
3-DAY SEAT SALE
OCTOBER 1,2&3,2004
From Manila it's now P1,299 (one-way) to any destination in the Visayas.**
And only P1,899 (one-way) to any point in Mindanao.**
With our renowned on-time service and special low fares, you'll have time & money on your hands.
MECHANICS:
- Tickets purchased during the promo period can be used only during the travel period of October 1 to 31, 2004.
- Tickets are non-endorsable, non-transferable and non-refundable.
- Tickets are refundable within the travel period subject to refunding fee of P150.
- Tickets are reroutable and upgradable to next higher fare type within the travel period but subject to applicable charges and collection of fare difference.
- Reissuance of tickets must be done within the travel period.
- ATLs/Pre-paid ticket advice not allowed.
- Other promotions such as regular discounts may not apply during the seats promo period.
- Not applicable to groups.
- Open-dated tickets are allowed during the travel period.
- Pre-discounted airline rates shall apply in both airports and stations.
- Available at Cebu Pacific's ticket offices, General Sales Agents and accredited call agents. Express Ticket Office at the Manila Domestic airport is not included.
CEBU PACIFIC
WE'RE GOING YOUR WAY

INQUIRER Visayas

E-mail: ivisay_cebu@inquirer.com.ph

Editor Jose Jose Bandayrel
Bureau Chief Rodolfa L. Bermudez

Balangiga rings bells in austere times

By Rolando O. Bartolaga
Balangiga, Eastern Samar

THE POINT on the bank of the locally petered's shores said it all: "Let the bells ring (from) the belfry where they belong."

With that terse message, the town of Balangiga in Eastern Samar commemorated the 103rd anniversary of the "Balangiga Encounter Day" last Tuesday, Sept. 28.

In line with the government's austerity measures during the fiscal crisis, the town also cut on some expenses. The ceremonial activities were all cramped up in the morning, including the theatrical reenactment of their famous event, which used to be held in the afternoon.

And the town parade after the morning church Mass no longer had the customary floats, including the one with the story of the massacre with the court belle of Balangiga now displayed at an Air Force base in the United States.

And the town now talks about three identified bells, not just two, which they wish to be returned to the church belfry of their town.

The historical event

The officially called "Balangiga Encounter" refers to the local event in the morning of Saturday, Sept. 28, 1901, when 500 native Filipino fighters nearly annihilated Company C, 9th US Infantry Regiment, who were mostly eating or lining up for breakfast in their garrison in the town.

The result was the "worst single defeat" of the US during the Philippine-American War more than a century ago. This event was known in US official reports and publications as the "Balangiga Massacre."

Of the 74 men of Company C, 36 were killed during the attack (including the three commissioned officers), eight of the wounded died later during the escape by banca to Basey town, and four were missing and presumed dead.

Of the 26 American survivors, only four were not wounded.

The natives suffered 28 deaths and 22 wounded.

For a long time, it had been believed that the church bells of Balangiga were used to signal the attack on the US troops. But two recently published books about the Balangiga town hall establishment that that attack had begun when a bell was rung as signal for the hidden weaponsmen to join the attack on the garrison.

Considered one of the worst defeats in US military history, the Filipino victory in Balangiga was also "unequaled" in the records that the US government has not yet regretted nor apologized for.

US military authorities combined with a "kill and burn" policy to take back Samar, deliberately spawning a victorious small town with an entire island, from October 1901 to January 1902.

Implemented by the Bath Supreme Brigade under Brig. Gen. Jacob E. Smith of the US Army, which included a battalion of US Marines under Major Littleton T. W. Waller, the campaign was blamed for the alleged disappearance of some 11,000 people in Samar.

The general reportedly gave orders to kill anybody capable of bearing arms (specifically, 10 years old and above) during the combat operations to reduce Samar into a "howling wilderness."

Aside from the population loss, the famed campaign resulted in massive devastation of the rural economic base in terms of hundreds of burned houses, destroyed native boats, and slaughtered carabaos, the Filipinos' draft animals. US troops likewise burned and confiscated rice and food stocks and slashed woody abaca (Manila) fibers, the principal source of local cash income.

General Smith was eventually made the scapegoat for the shameful policy on Samar. He was forced to retire from the US Army following a court martial.

The three church bells of Balangiga were taken days after the attack by men of the 11th US Infantry, another US Army unit that occupied the abandoned town before being relieved by US Marines on Oct. 23, 1901.

'War trophies'

These "war trophies" were shipped out of the Leyte-Samar region from the headquarters of the 11th US Infantry as the former Camp Romps, now the Leyte Park Resort in Tacloban City.

The camp was named after 1st Lt. Edward A. Romps, Harvard alumnus and second in command of Company C, who was also killed in Balangiga.

The smallest bell was turned over to the headquarters of the 9th US Infantry Regiment in Gaffenberg, Samar, around April 1902. The 9th is on permanent display at the traveling museum of the 9th US Infantry, now stationed in Yongdochon, South Korea.

The two bigger bells were brought to the US by returning 11th Infantry soldiers to their home station at the former Fort D.A. Russell, now the US Warren Air Force Base, in Cheyenne, Wyoming. Both are now displayed at the Balangiga Memorial in its Trophy Park.

The return of the bells of Balangiga to the Philippines remains the last issue of contention between the US and Philippine governments related to the Philippine-American War.

Prospects

In an interview with the locators, Balangiga Mayor Catalina M. Generalao hoped that the US government would take the initiative to have the bells in Wyoming returned to her town in the spirit of peace and reconciliation.

In a speech prepared for the occasion, Eastern Samar Gov. Ben P. Evardone cited recent findings of the Balangiga Research Group (BRG) related to the bells issue.

The BRG is a multi-sectoral group composed of this author, Bob Custodio, a Subic-based video director and historian, and Jose Wall, the daughter the first American soldier to be awarded in Balangiga a memorial.

The BRG findings presented indispensable proofs of the Balangiga origin of the three bells.

Experts around the world that the BRG had consulted agree one in saying that based on current laws, military law, and international customs, the contested bells belong to Balangiga.

All US officials directly involved in the Balangiga issue on both sides of the Pacific, including US Army senior leaders and diplomats, have also been one in saying, although grimly that their government knows that the right, legal and ethical course of action is to return the bells to their rightful place—that is, to Balangiga.

Citing, of these, the US Congress, through the Judge Code of Military Justice, has practically ruled that the bells are the rightful property of the town of Balangiga.

"Now that the US government has run out of arguments to skirt the issue of the Balangiga bells, perhaps it is high time for President George Bush to instruct the political staff to return these bells where they belong, and bring a closure to the last issue of contention between the Philippines and United States related to the Philippine-American War a century ago," Evardone said.

THE BALANGIGA church and the part of the anniversary crowd in last Tuesday's 103rd commemoration of the "Balangiga Encounter Day"

THE TWO bigger bells that were brought to the US by returning 11th Infantry soldiers to their home station are now displayed at the Balangiga Memorial in its Trophy Park.

THE BALANGIGA Memorial, sculpted by national artist Napoleon Abueva, was unveiled last year and is the main attraction of the Balangiga town plaza.

Young cancer patient thanks God, Inquirer readers

By Jaime B. Balanban
Cebu City

THREE days before his Sept. 15 scheduled operation, Jane Arceo celebrated his 12th birthday and had only one wish in mind—to survive. He got what he wished for.

Indeed, it was a wish come true for Jane, a young cancer victim, who just survived the most crucial surgery that would entail only one his life.

Fresh from eight hours of delicate surgery to remove the tumor in his right pelvic area, Jane could only utter the words "Thank You Lord" when he regained consciousness.

He was also elated when he realized that his leg was not amputated, contrary to what his doctors earlier told him.

"I looked for my parents when I woke up. I was very happy to see them at the recovery room with me. I also smiled when I discovered that my leg was not cut. I really felt elated when they told me that I was going to the recovery room. I was trembling in fear and I was not sure why I was being taken. I was finally so elated, I really prayed hard," Jane said.

Dr. Judith Arul, Jane's orthopedist, told the Sunday Inquirer that the tumor grew bigger and covered the entire right pelvis of the patient.

The most measured 469.5x10 centimeters, prompting the doctors to consider amputating the right limb to allow the removal of the tumor.

It was a 'miracle'

However, the doctors later agreed to combine the "limb salvage surgery" to save the right leg, while successfully removing the tumor.

"Our first priority was to remove the tumor and go on with the chemotherapy. Instead, we decided to save the leg even if some nerves connected to it would be affected. We have to sacrifice some parts of the nerves," Arul said.

Jane would be subjected to intense physical therapy sessions aimed at making him functional, she added.

Saying that the surgery was easier because the chemotherapy really helped. Everything else aside from the leg was okay. Jane would be trained to move, stand and later walk with a walker and crutches," Arul said.

Jane, who visited by the Inquirer three days after the surgery, was recovering fast. After just three weeks of confinement, he was finally discharged.

Jane said he was lucky for doctors those who helped him during his difficult moments.

Aside from his loving parents, Joseph and Vilma, the doctors were not alone. Relatives, friends, colleagues in the workplace and even total strangers offered hope and support to the family.

Jane said what happened to him was a "miracle."

"I felt I was not alone. I am very happy that people, some of them strangers, supported me. The Lord is so good. I am very grateful," Jane told the locators in his hospital bed.

Jane, who was diagnosed to have been afflicted with soft tissue sarcoma cancer that was already on its fourth stage, was featured in the Inquirer Visayas on its August 16 issue appealing for help.

When the story was published, Jane had been responding well and completing the 12 cycles of chemotherapy and was already ready for the surgery to remove the cancer mass that was special in his abdomen. The only problem then was that his parents did not have the P200,000 needed for the medical procedure.

Overwhelming help

Joseph, a technician, who only earns P6,000 a month, was overwhelmed with gratitude to those who were touched by his son's strong will to live and responded to his son's story.

He said the lessons that the surgery could not have been made possible if not for the donations that poured in from its generous readers.

The elder Arceo said an individual from Leyte who read the lessons story called him and donated money. They were able to raise more than P60,000 from them. "We are so grateful to the donors. The donations we received did help us since the surgery, medication and the laboratory expenses cost at least P200,000. The donors were also supportive and we thank them for their comfort and prayer," Joseph said.

The father also said four Filipinos, three working and one studying, abroad also extended financial help upon reading his son's story on http://the-locators.website.

"I never expected this. I was surprised when I got calls and text messages from people saying they're Filipinos working in Saudi, Cyprus and Japan who wanted to help us. We are really very grateful," the teary-eyed father said.

High hopes

Dr. Linda Lipatan, Jane's pediatric chemotherapy hematologist, said the boy would still have to undergo additional chemotherapy sessions because his tumor cells have spread over his bone marrow area.

The doctor said she was still determining the result of the bone marrow test, which she scheduled before the surgery to determine whether the cancer cells have spread over to the other organs such as the lungs and chest.

But she explained that Jane's chance of survival was high since he responded well to the first 12 cycles of chemotherapy.

"I have high hopes for Jane. In two to three weeks from now he would be undergoing another chemotherapy but this time it's going to be more intensive. There could have been lesser risk if the cancer was localized but in his case it haven't localized anywhere yet," Lipatan said.

Joseph also thanked his colleagues who donated blood and his employer, the Metro Gaisano Corp., for extending us a guarantee to the hospital through a letter of authorization.

Lipatan said Jane's chemotherapy might run for a year, which means additional financial burden for the donors.

But Joseph, hopeful he is strong will and determination of his son to live, would not stop from finding means to help the patient.

Those who are interested to help may contact Joseph Arceo at his mobile phone 0916-7541771.

JANE Arceo grins when he finds that his leg was not amputated, thanks to timely surgery that was mainly paid for by Inquirer readers who responded to his plea for help.

Bush gives RP special mention on terror fight

From page A1

mentioned alongside Iraq and Afghanistan. Malacañang officials preferred to take this as a positive sign.

"It was a pretty straightforward assessment on the ongoing fight against terrorism by both candidates," Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye said.

"We did get help from the US in terms of training. Their units assist projects in the first Sulaimon did it with the rehabilitation Basilan which was the former hotbed of the this feature," he added.

Still on the map

"It's good," Presidential Chief of Staff Norberto Gonzales said when Bush mentioned the Philippines. "The reality is we are on the map of global terrorism and we don't want to hide that."

"It's true that we're doing something against terrorism although we are more A Demush identified than al Qaeda's," he said.

Gonzales was former national security adviser who was part of the negotiations for the release of a Filipino truck driver abducted by Iraqi militants last July 14 and the Philippines' proximity to Indonesia and the existence of armed groups such As the Moro Islamic Liberation Front in Mindanao made the Philippines a "prime destination of terrorists."

"What I heard recently was that Bush was no longer mentioning the Philippines among the allies but he has to mention us in the debate (because) we are still in Sabah remember," Gonzales said.

Bunye, who watched the US presidential debate, initially lamented about Bush, saying it was on "internal matters" for the US.

The debate, held at the University of Miami in Florida, was the first in a series to help undecided American voters choose their next President in the November elections.

"The debate was a good exchange," Bunye said. "Both candidates did well."

Bunye said he paid closer attention to the exercises than the actual debate and stated that some comments included the observation that Bush is a strong leader" and that Kerry "has not shown that he is a really good negotiator."

Meanwhile, President Macapagal-Arroyo could not be roused into tweeting which kindled the man-counting fire.

The administration senators, however, did not take too kindly to Bush's claim that Manila was part of the international terrorist network, saying the claim was not only false, it's something the country did not need right now.

Not right

Sen. Manuel Villar Jr. said it was incorrect for Bush to mention the Philippines in relation to his problems with Iraq.

"He's got a lot of problems in his candidacy right now," Villar said, adding that the US President should not have included the Philippines in his bid for re-election.

He noted that Bush was trying to raise the image of the Philippines in the international community.

"I don't think (he is) on any way in town a longtime ill ally such as the Philippines," Villar said.

Sen. Ralph Recto also remarked, "The world's most powerful man just told a worldwide audience of half-a billion that the Philippines is a major battleground in the war against terror."

Kerry wins 1st presidential ...

From page A1

But Kerry managed to deliver his most cogent attack yet on the Iraq war and convey a sense of solidity and coherence in front of the man who has spent months ridiculing him as a weak-kneed waffler.

Very effective

"I think he was very effective in downplaying the argument that he had flipped and flopped on different issues," said David Corbin, a political science professor at the University of New Hampshire.

It was not clear whether Kerry's showing would translate directly into the new support he badly needs to overcome Bush's lead in the polls, generally estimated as five to eight points.

But several analysts said he now had a chance of recharging the somewhat dispirited Democratic ranks and reinstating Bush anti-Bush voters who had deserted him amid doubts about his leadership.

The debate was made or break for Kerry, whose campaign had been reeling from relentless Republican assaults on his credibility, toughness and vaunted combat record in the Vietnam war.

Kerry charged that Bush committed "a colossal error" by invading Iraq, as tens of millions of Americans watched the televised confrontation.

'Mixed messages'

Bush countered that Kerry was undermining US credibility in the war on terrorism with "mixed messages" about whether toppling Saddam Hussein was worth the cost.

"What message does that send our troops? What message does that send to our allies? What message does that send the people?" the Republican incumbent asked.

Iraq and national security dominated as the two candidates battled over how to stabilize that war-torn country, where more than 1,000 US soldiers have died amid deadly chaos that shows no sign of ebbing.

Kerry threw the first punch to the political pleasantries by confidently declaring "I can do a better job" on Iraq and on averting another terrorist attack like the Sept. 11, 2001 strikes.

He also charged Bush unreasonably threw oil resources from the hunt for Osama bin Laden to the war in Iraq, saying: "This president has made, I regret to say, a colossal error of judgment. And judgment is what we look for in the presidency."

"The world is better off without Saddam Hussein," said the president, who pointed his finger at Kerry on crucial national security issues, stating he wanted to authorize the Iraq war in 2002 but once opposed sending in Apache helicopters.

"We're not going to achieve our objective if we send mixed signals to our troops, our friends, the Iraqi citizens," said Bush, "You cannot lead if you send mixed messages."

"I've had one position, one consistent position, that Saddam Hussein was a threat. There was a right way to disarm him and a wrong way and the president chose the wrong way" countered the Massachusetts senator.

Worldwide popularity

Kerry has accused Bush of fracturing alliances and damaging US global standing in the rush to war. Bush has charged Kerry is more concerned about worldwide popularity than protecting the United States.

Bush enjoys predictable political victory.

The Republicans said Bush effectively fought fighted the mixed signals the Democrats were sending on Iraq. They said the president made a compelling case for more time as the US war on terror he started after the Sept. 11, 2001 attacks.

Democrats hailed their candidate for burnishing away at the war in Iraq as a diversion from the real battle against al Qaeda terrorists and building his credentials as a smarter, more effective commander.

Kerry also tried to counter confusion over his various votes in the Senate on Iraq by acknowledging that he might have Dubbed some of his rhetoric, but Bush's muddled vacuous was much worse.

Losing steam

While Bush started strong in holding himself out as the best hope for keeping the United States safe, some analysts said, he appeared to lose steam and showed some restlessness towards the middle of the debate before closing with a rhetorical.

AFP

Debate show: No surprises despite hype

NEW YORK — A TV review of Thursday's presidential debate would have mostly basic advice: before anything. And it was, by many critics.

There were no surprises in the 90 minutes spat show featuring President George W. Bush and his Democratic challenger, Sen. John Kerry.

For Kerry, the importance of the debate had been diminished by the media in lively terms.

"This is routine, and somebody will lose," said Bob Beckel Jr. on MSNBC just moments before the debate began.

Bush and Kerry would score by "sticking it out," said Fox News Channel's Shepard Smith, still peddling the line that neither candidate could muster the other's spare three minutes away, or vote out the other's direct question.

All that and more was reviewed in the "Microanalysis of Underwhelming," a 24-page flipchart that was shown to reporters and pundits in self-defense by representatives of both candidates, this contract also covered podium height. 30-second countdown lights, the format of the questioning and many other details in an effort to keep nothing needlessly to chance—and to prevent a damaging mistake.

The most radical departure from the usual's terms were the networks' frequent split-screen shots, showing one candidate's response to the other's remarks.

Before the hour's spoke, there were that were non-glamorous, dulling and looking annoyed.

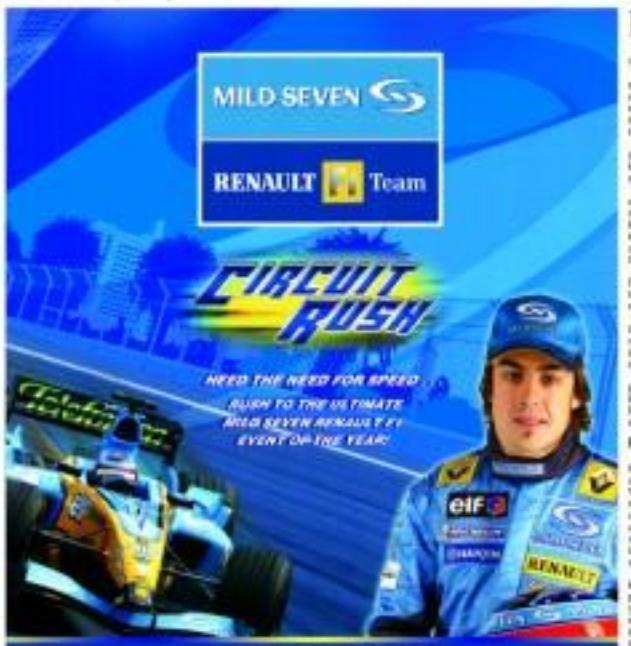
While Bush spoke, Kerry often appeared to eat fake notes.

"John Kerry was clearly aware that the camera might always be on him," said CNN's Jeff Greenfield, who added that, in a review one phrase—as presidential as the president."

Who won? It was a question senarists couldn't help making guesses about.

Instant polls by ABC and CBS gave the night to Kerry.

AP



Popular ...

From page A1

narine to drugs like aspirin that can cause ulcers and gastrointestinal bleeding. It has been marketed in more than 80 countries.

The decision to remove the drug from the market is the largest drug recall in history as measured by sales.

Merck stock plunged 27 percent Thursday on the news, as during the company's worst ever bet value by $25 billion and helping pull the Dow Jones industrial average down by 0.6 percent for the day.

Health Secretary Manuel Dayrit said he had not heard from the local distributor of the drug concerning the Vioxx pullout.

Dayrit said that the Philippine General Hospital had admitted cases of Filipino patients suffering from side-effects after an intake of Vioxx.

"If there has been a worldwide pullout then the order from the Bureau of Food and Drugs should be our cues as well," Dayrit told the Inquirer.

Results of study

Merck decided to pull the drug from pharmacy shelves after a study that it helped would show Vioxx prevented colon polyps, which can sometimes become cancerous. Instead, the study showed that the drug led to fewer attacks and strokes. After getting the results of last month, Merck quickly ended the trial.

The risk was small—15 cases of heart attacks, strokes or blood clots per thousand people over three years compared with 11 such episodes per thousand patients taking a placebo, but the data were so unambiguous that Merck told federal regulators this week that it had halted the trial and would take the drug off the market, it announced in a letter dated Thursday.

"What we found at the study a that beginning after 18 months, there was a discernible and unexplained increase in cardiovascular disease rates," Dr. Peter S. Liss, president of Merck's research labs, said.

The right thing

"We think Merck did the right thing," said Dr. Steven E. Nissen, the incoming director of the Heart Center for Drug Evaluation and Research.

The possibility that Vioxx might increase the risk of heart attacks first emerged three years ago, in a study of only 67 Alzheimer's with Cleveland arthritis.

Vioxx and the two Pfizer unlisted drugs are designed to block inflammation and pain as effective as standard nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs such as aspirin and ibuprofen, while causing far fewer ulcers and gastrointestinal problems than the older treatments.

Pfizer statement

Pfizer Inc., which markets Celebrex, a competitor of Vioxx, affirmed the safety of Celebrex.

In a statement, Pfizer said over 27 million patients in the United States had been prescribed with Celebrex (celecoxib) and that in the Philippines, there had been over four million prescriptions since its launch. Celebrex was approved by the Philippine Bureau of Food and Drugs in 1999.

"There is confidence in the long-term cardiovascular safety of Celebrex," said Dr. Joe Wolfe, Pfizer president of worldwide development.

ED regulators said drugs in the same category as the withdrawn Vioxx would get close scrutiny to see if they also could cause heart attacks.

"We are going to be more interested in looking at long-term data on new products that come down the pike," Dr. Steven Galson, acting director of the Food and Drug Administration's Center for Drug Evaluation and Research, told reporters.

More lawsuits?

An Oklahoma lawsuit filed on Thursday charging that Merck & Co. misled patients about the safety of its anti-arthritis drug signal many more such suits against the drugmaker following its withdrawal of Vioxx, legal experts said.

The suit, filed on behalf of the Oklahoma County resident has likely to become a major test case of allegations Vioxx raises the risk of heart attack, blood clots and other serious cardiovascular events, which can lead to injuries and death.

"In America we sue," said defense lawyer Andrew Kramer, professor of law at St. John's University in New York. "This is very much a visceral reaction by the market, but I have to say it is an overreaction."

No cover-up

"Merck took proactive actions ... There was not an element of cover-up," he said.

The Vioxx withdrawal comes similar to health-related actions such as Bayer AG's 2001 decision to pull cholesterol-drug Baycol off the market after it was linked to severe muscle weakness and Wyeth's 1997 recall of diet drug fen-phen, which was found to cause valve damage and a deadly lung condition. *New York Times, Agence France-Presse, Reuters, AP and Manchester Union.*

Government Warning :
Cigarette smoking is dangerous to your health.

BUSINESS

Ecozone investments surge 90% to P30.4B

By Reena V. Domingo

INVESTMENTS in the various economic zones jumped 90 percent in the first nine months to P30.4 billion from P16 billion a year ago, the Philippine Economic Zone Authority reported yesterday.

For September alone, automotive-related projects made up the bulk of investments commitments amounting to P1.86 billion.

The Peza said projects approved last month were expected to generate a yearly average of $175 million in export receipts. The projects would also create some 1,000 jobs for directly hired workers.

The biggest investment approved last month in terms of project cost was Denso Automotive (Philippines) Inc.'s P960.8-million facility for the manufacture of non-turnover and/or body-drive motors.

The Isetsuki Iron's project will be located at the Food Terminal Inc. economic zone expected to generate $40.4 million in receipts each year.

Another P568.7-million project, which the proponent asked to be kept confidential, was the second biggest project approved last month. It is expected to earn $86.4 million a year.

Steel Mixer Co. Philippines Inc.'s P64.3 million revision of its existing project to include the assembly of knocked-down jets at the Greenfield Automotive Park economic was also approved by the Peza in September.

Steelmixer expects to earn $29.5 million a year from its exports to Vietnam and other Southeast Asian countries.

Philippine Mita Washing Technologies Inc. also got the Peza's nod for its P62.5-million project for the washing of machine and garments at the Calamba Premiere International Park economic. The Japanese firm sees earnings of $1 million a year from its customers in Europe, the United States and Asia.

Amster Corp.'s P49.7 million expansion of its manufacturing of metal components for copiers, fax units and multifunction equipment as well as related electronic parts at the Laguna International Industrial Park economic was also approved by the Peza last month.

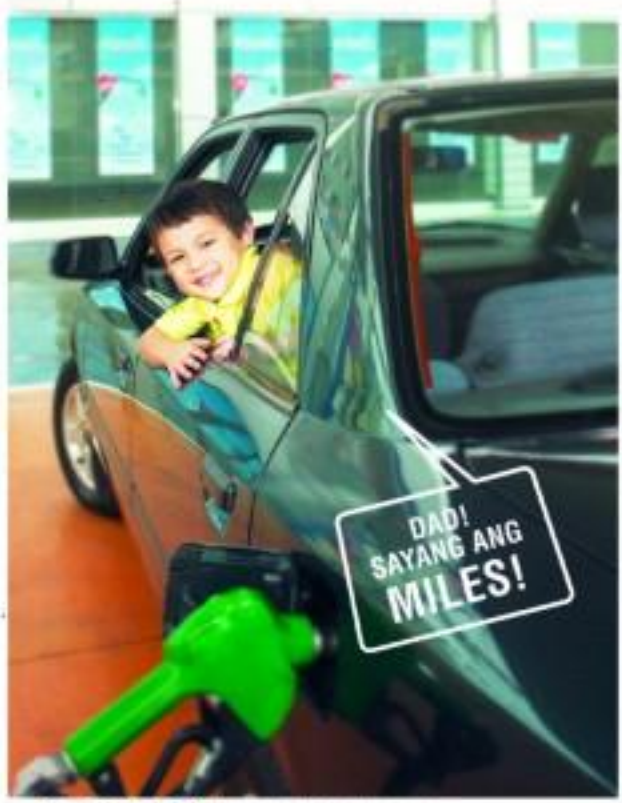
The Japanese firm expects to garner $4.3 million in annual export receipts from its markets in the United States, Japan, China and Mexico.

The Peza also approved Philippine Techno Realty Inc.'s P45-million project to lease existing buildings to Peza registered businesses at the Pitx Textile Industrial Estate economic.

Stocks near 54-month high

STOCKS closed sharply higher yesterday, with the main index registering its best finish in nearly 54 months on a combination of technical factors and favorable fundamentals, traders said.

The 30-company Philippine Stock Exchange Index ended up 23.60 points, or 1.3 percent, at 1,787.20, its highest close since April 10, 2000, when it finished at 1,798.06. (Details in Business)



YOUR GASOLINE CAN GET YOU EXTRA MILES FOR FREE TRIPS.

Earn one Mile for every PhP1 you charge.

You can also earn double or triple the Miles at select establishments.

And with just 2,500 Miles, you can already fly for free to a local destination.

With Mabuhay Miles Visa from HSBC, everyday can bring you Miles closer to free local or international trips. Apply for one today.

HSBC
The world's local bank

YOU CAN FLY FREE – ABSOLUTELY FREE!*

NO FEES TO PAY WHEN YOU APPLY FOR A MABUHAY MILES VISA FROM 3 SEPTEMBER – 30 NOVEMBER 2004*.

Carry the credit card that lets you fly free for as little as 2,500 Miles.

You can earn Miles in all your purchases – and double or triple the Miles in select stores. With Mabuhay Miles Visa, you're sure to fly for free!

JUST CALL!
751-8000 (METRO MANILA)
(032) 415-9888 (CEBU)
(082) 389-2220 (DAVAO)

JUST TEXT!
Text HSBC<space>Full Name<space>Area Code+Phone Number<space>Email Address

JUST LOG ON!
www.hsbc.com.ph

Apply for a Mabuhay Miles Visa today – and enjoy the reward you could only dream about with other credit cards. And only it's easy to apply, it's absolutely FREE!

How can ... sayang ang Miles!

Mabuhay MILES

SMC's 8-month profit up 28% at ₱4.76B

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

SMC and beverage giant San Miguel Corp. (SMC) reported its net profit for 28 percent to ₱4.76 billion from January to August, boosted by higher beer volumes and lower costs for its soft drink group, the Coca-Cola Beverage Group.

Consolidated net earnings in the same period last year was ₱3.72 billion, the company said in its disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange.

Consolidated operating income rose 35 percent to ₱10.1 billion. Consolidated revenues climbed 12 percent to ₱85.87 billion as of August. Corporate volumes from January to August were also all generally higher.

Local beer sales volume for the eight-month period surged 26 percent from last year. Sales revenues from domestic beer operations were also up 20 percent to ₱20.4 billion. Operating profit also jumped 20 percent to ₱4.71 billion.

SMC said the benefits of improved distribution, right pool arrangements and the influx of new drinkers in the market translated to these gains.

For international beer operations, sales volume grew 13 percent for the first eight months. Its figures were specified free-to-date revenues for international beer operations climbed 16 percent to ₱666.3 million from ₱549.3 million during the same period last year.

SMC, however, said it was spending close to ₱1 billion to expand its bottling facilities covering this year.

A new Pantabangan-based bottling plant in Cavite will be operating by the third quarter to process bottled and cans, among other processed meats.

In Batangas, a flour mill and a flour-blending facility have also been completed and commercial operations are expected to start soon.

The company's expansion and modernization program in the food sector is part of the larger program to invest an estimated ₱1.5 billion to the domestic market over the next three years.

Stocks near . . .

From page B1

while 42 stocks were unchanged.

The index rose 1.1 percent on Thursday.

SM Prime was the most active stock, closing up 6.6 percent at ₱6.60. Before the market opened, the country's largest mall operator said it had raised ₱13.9 million via a syndicated term loan facility to be used for expansion. SM Prime said its first subfacility was oversubscribed, indicating the company secured favorable terms.

PLDT rose 1.8 percent to ₱1,420 after the country's largest telecommunications group said yesterday its cellular subscriber base has crossed 17 million.

PLDT rival Globe Telecom gained 2.8 percent to a record high ₱1,710 on expectations that its cellular subscriber base is also growing at a healthy pace, given PLDT's performance.

Early in the session, the market managed to rise past the 1,763.30, its 52-month closing high set last Friday, and the rally petered.

"The sentiment trend is still intact," said SB Market Investment President Nestor Aguila. "In terms of fundamentals, all the negative news has been discounted by the market, including the high oil prices."

The market's upside was capped in past sessions by concerns over the impact high oil prices will have on the economy and corporate earnings. AP

Currencies

October 1, 2004 Country	Unit	Peso Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	56.0000	1.00000	56.0000
Japan	Yen	0.50764	0.00907	110.2900
United Kingdom	Pound	1.02720	1.83440	54.5560
Hong Kong	Dollar	7.18000	0.12821	7.8000
Australia	Dollar	0.41400	0.73929	75.3600
Canada	Dollar	0.43417	0.77530	72.1700
Singapore	Dollar	0.41700	0.74464	75.4700
Switzerland	Franc	1.37100	2.44821	40.8400
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.15000	0.26786	149.2000
Saudi Arabia	Riyal	0.15000	0.26786	209.0000
Kuwait	Dinar	0.18400	0.32857	170.4000
Bahrain	Dinar	0.14800	0.26429	211.9000
Thailand	Baht	0.01400	0.02500	2240.0000
Qatar	Riyal	0.15400	0.27500	203.6000
Euro	Euro	0.68000	1.21429	82.4000
Argentina	Peso	0.02000	0.03571	28.0000
Brazil	Real	0.19000	0.33929	294.4000
Mexico	Peso	0.05000	0.08929	112.0000
Taiwan	Dollar	0.03000	0.05357	1866.7000
India	Rupee	0.01200	0.02143	1400.0000
Korea	Won	0.04000	0.07143	1400.0000
Brunei	Dollar	0.41000	0.73214	76.8000
New Zealand	Dollar	0.34000	0.60714	91.8000
Vietnam	Dong	0.00300	0.00536	10400.0000
Pakistan	Rupee	0.01000	0.01786	5600.0000
Saudi Arabia	Riyal	0.15000	0.26786	209.0000
Russia	Ruble	0.00200	0.00357	28000.0000
Sweden	Krona	0.07400	0.13214	757.0000
Syria	Pound	0.01400	0.02500	2240.0000
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.00600	0.01071	9333.0000

Disclosures

CLOVER directors of **Hydrogen Inc.** were Orlando Vea, David Fernando, Rufian Morales, Dolpo Buenaventura, Rodelio Pineda, Jose Marquinio Fernandez, John Butterworth, Gilmundo Sorrano and Angelo Bautista.

***

BENPRES Holdings Corp. confirmed that the Quezon City Regional Trial Court Branch 90 approved the petition for corporate rehabilitation filed by Maynilad Water Services Inc.

***

THE BOARD of directors of **Banco de Oro Universal Bank** approved the issuance of up to 25 million redeemable preferred shares series B with par value of ₱10.00 per share.

***

ABOITIZ Transport System Corp. a board of directors fixed Oct. 25 as the payment date of ₱0.0125 per share or ₱250,749,500 or 25 percent stock dividend declared by the board on Oct. 23 and ratified by the stockholders last Dec. 18, 2003.

***

ASIABEST Bank's board of directors approved the appointments of Edwin Cacho as corporate secretary, Primo Cacho as officer in charge of the comptrollership group and Emer Bilbao as corporate information officer.

***

HAMADA Hosea Jr. first vice president of **Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co.** disposed 2,000 of his shares at ₱1,218 per share on Aug. 31. *Compiled by Gigi Lopez, PDI Research*

VISIT THE COUNTRY'S MOST COMPREHENSIVE 5-IN-1 MACHINERY AND TECHNOLOGY SHOWCASE!
FREE admission
Enviro-tech Philippines 2004
PhilTRONICS 2004
METAL Philippines '04
WOODMACH Philippines 2004
Pack Print Plas Philippines
OCTOBER 7-10, 2004 · 10:00 AM - 6:00 PM · WORLD TRADE CENTER METRO MANILA
Exhibit Space Rates
Free 10,000 sq. m. of Exhibit Space already booked!
Free 100 sqm. exhibition booth for Exhibitors
Free Admission Badge for Visitors
Free 1,000 sqm. exhibition area available for display
Free 24 Hours Use of Forklifts, Electric Hoists and Cranes
Waived Cargo Handling Fees from Ship Alongside, Singapore and Subic
Exhibitor Profile / Call Sheet
Name of Company (Exhibitor) / Name of Booth Representative / Position / Address / Telephone / Fax / Email
Exhibit Space Rates
Shell Scheme Booth ... Php 6,000.00 per sq. m.
Raw Space ... Php 5,000.00 per sq. m.
Corner Premium ... Php 500.00 per sq. m.
Island Premium ... Php 1,000.00 per sq. m.
Special Booth

BSP: Liquidity up by 6.1% to ₱1.72T

By Doris C. Dumlao

PUBLIC sector borrowings continued to fuel the expansion in the country's net domestic credits, contributing to the growth of domestic liquidity.

The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas yesterday reported that domestic liquidity, or M3, grew by 6.1 percent year-on-year to ₱1.72 trillion as of end-August 2004, mainly due to the rise in the BSP's net foreign assets (NFA) and an improvement in net domestic credits.

"The growth in domestic credits was due mainly to increased availments by the public sector, which rose by 16.4 percent, as banks continued to purchase government securities," the BSP reported.

The public sector includes the national government as well as government-owned and -controlled corporations.

Credits to the private sector likewise grew strongly by 4.6 percent from the previous month's 4 percent rise.

The M3 of the monetary system rose by 0.3 percent in August due mainly to revaluation adjustments in the BSP's foreign currency-denominated assets as a result of the weaker peso.

The m3 growth in August, however, was a deceleration from the 6.7 percent increase of the previous month.

M (seasonally adjusted terms, m3 grew by 0.1 percent month-on-month in August, slightly lower than the 0.9 percent monthly increase posted in July this year.

"The moderate though steady growth in domestic liquidity has been accompanied by improvements in domestic demand," the BSP said.

It cited, for instance, that average capacity utilization in July increased 79.7 percent as a percentage of total capacity in the manufacturing sector, up from the 78.7 percent utilization rate in July last year.

"Both exports and imports reflected improvements during the year, growing year-on-year by 5.1 percent and 5.6 percent, respectively, in July 2004 from the contraction in exports of 5.1 percent and slight 1.4 percent growth in imports in July 2003," the BSP said.

It added that employment data also improved during the first quarter, with the unemployment rate dropping to 11.7 percent from 12.6 percent during the same period of the previous year.

"In the months ahead, monetary authorities will continue to monitor developments in the real and monetary sectors to ensure that liquidity conditions remain consistent with price stability objective," the BSP said.

GMA 7 to launch own cable channel in US

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

GMA NETWORK Inc. in January is set to launch its own cable channel in the United States, according to network sources.

The television giant would offer Filipinos living on the US West Coast cable subscription to GMA 7 programs such as soap operas and entertainment shows.

But the plans have yet to be firmed up, sources said. If things were to go as planned, this would be the first time GMA 7 would hit foreign shores.

GMA recorded a net profit of ₱985 million in the first seven months of the year, up 20 percent from ₱767 million a year ago. This brings it nearer to its ₱1.3-billion goal for the year.

The company's revenue grew 17 percent to ₱4.3 billion from January to July. But operating expenses also increased by 20 percent to about ₱2 billion from ₱1.7 billion a year ago.

Felipe Gozon, GMA president, had said the company would push through with its initial public offering in the first quarter of 2005.

Gozon said the company would be running on underwriters during the third quarter.

The company is planning to sell 30 percent of its shares to the public to raise as much as ₱9 billion.

PSALM sells 4th Napocor genco for $0.41M

By Abigail L. Ho

THE POWER Sector Assets and Liabilities Management Corp. (PSALM) last Thursday sold for $410,410 the 400-kilowatt (kW) Tiwi-based hydroelectric plant in Bicol — one of 10 National Power Corp.-generation plants on the auction block.

Synergon E Electric Corporation (formerly Tiwi was one bidder for the plant....Chevron Corporation and Lamsan Venture Corporation.

The first scheduled bidding for the Corporation plant was declared a failure when all bids fell short of the government's floor price. Section 6 was also part of the roster of bidders for the asset during the first round of bidding.

"This successful bid should signal that government is proceeding forward with its privatization program, even as it is looking for the best deal and long-term solutions to the energy and fiscal situation," said Vincent Perez, energy secretary and concurrent privatization, bids and awards committee head.

The Corporation plant was the fourth Napocor generation asset PSALM was able to sell since the Joint Congressional Power Commission approved the genco groupings and the privatization schedule in December last year.

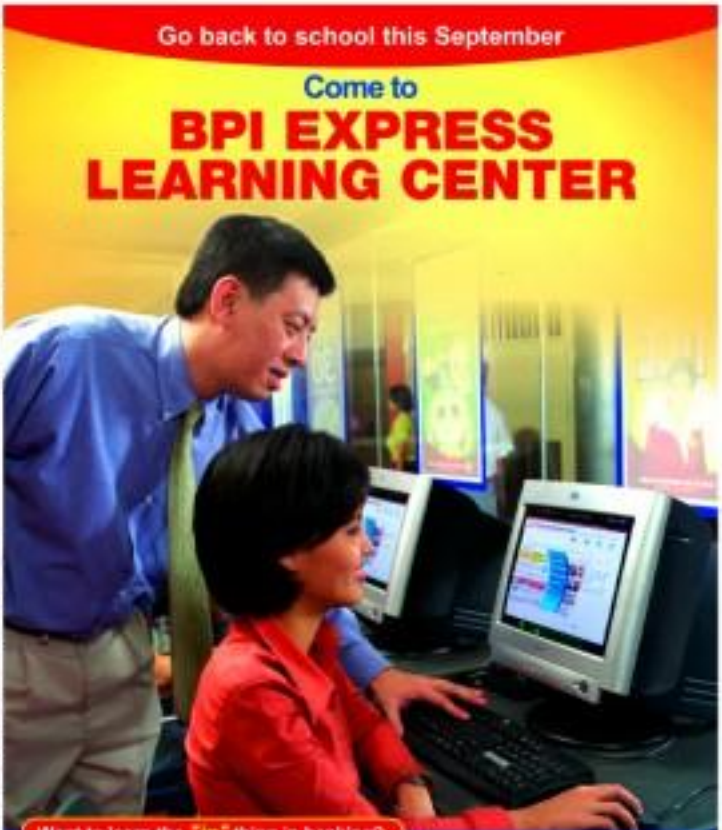
The three other plants the state firm had sold were hydroelectric in nature: the 3.5-megawatt (MW) Talomo plant in Davao; the 7.5-MW Agusan plant in Bukidnon and the 1.8-MW Bueri plant in Camarines Sur.

The shortest Hydroelectric Development Corp. bagged the Talomo plant for $1.29 million in March, while the Lopezes' First Gen Hydro...

Go back to school this September

Come to

BPI EXPRESS LEARNING CENTER



Want to learn the "in" thing in banking?

Come and visit the BPI Express Learning Center (ELC) and we will teach you about the latest products that make banking easier and more convenient.

Learn online banking through Express Online in one visit. You will also be tutored in Express Phonebanking, which has an extensive menu for self-service transactions, whether you are a deposit client, a credit cardholder, or have loans or remittances with BPI. The ELC will also show you how to do cashless shopping through the Express Payment System's (EPS) POS Terminal.

The Express Learning Center also offers a special module on financial advice that can be given for Expat Pinoys and their beneficiaries, where they will learn how to do hassle-free remittances through Express Remit.

Come visit us at PARK SQUARE 1 at the AYALA CENTER IN MAKATI and get banking tutorials for FREE.

ADMISSION IS FREE!
Plus, get giveaways when you visit and enroll today!

Call 89-100 or log on to www.bpiexpressonline.com for more info.

BANK OF THE PHILIPPINE ISLANDS

EARNING PUBLIC GOODWILL

Firms to build model mining towns

By Vincent Cabreza
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

BAGUIO CITY—Companies are coming together to build modern mining communities, sites that would hopefully redeem the reputation of the past.

This according to the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry, which linked up with the Chamber of Mines to draw up detailed social and fiscal schemes for future mining towns.

But these will not be the usual mining towns, according to PCCI president Roberto Ongpin.

Learning from the fear of the country's older mining communities, PCCI will provide Filipinos more than a working economy that would allow them to envision the unity and role of huge mining operations.

Public hostility

Benguet Philip Romualdez, Chamber of Mines president, said public hostility to the mining industry could be traced back to the aims of the original miners.

Although mining firms invested highly in the development of mass mining towns, host communities and provinces rarely felt there because the national government absorbed most of those. Although taxes that were rarely passed back to the provinces, Romualdez said.

A PCCI case study also revealed that common mining communities have ended up echoing complaints on these mining companies, Salcedo said.

"Once the mines closed, the firms got the blame for the deterioration of their former host towns," she said.

The pervading hostility compelled the government to foster mine development projects that could be viable within the next two years, Romualdez said.

He said the Arroyo administration would need the projected P3 billion capital now lying idle.

Salcedo said the country's largest business organizations wanted to redeem this hostility by shouldering the cost of training and expanding small and medium scale enterprises in towns targeted for mining development.

"Communities that get excise taxes from the mines, or a share from their national taxes, must now be trained to use this for high-value opportunities," Romualdez said.

He said the PCCI and the mining sector would help secure funding for small and medium enterprises to these towns.

MINING Firms have been investing billions of pesos in social projects, such as elementary

Good faith

Salcedo said this would guarantee "good faith" for investors.

"That had always been in short supply since the Americans colonized government helped install American investors and local mining projects, said the militant Cordillera Peoples Alliance, a mining advocacy group in Northern Luzon.

Jean Carling, CBA chair, said commercial contracts must be allowed to study these modern mining towns because the government's deficit has compelled local governments to seek alternative economic sources.

"In short, next to oil, coal is also an environmental nightmare. Its mines are becoming very attractive because they need revenues to offset the possible loss of their internal revenue allotments," Carling said.

Romualdez, who is also president of Benguet Corp., the country's oldest mining company, said the industry might confront renewed militancy due to debate processes, which would reduce infrastructure spending.

But he said the industry could not ignore its history, which dated how large governmental bureaucracy racked up revolving off of the mining firms' contribution to local development since 1903.

Mining contributions

Benguet mines in Benguet, which hosted Benguet Corp. for 100 years and Philex Mining Corp. for 40 years, now ranks among the country's first class mines, but the province remained one of the 20 poorest provinces until 2003, according to the National Statistical Coordination Board (NSCB).

At its peak between 1977 and 1996, Benguet had contributed P25 billion in taxes, duties and community expenditures, based on data supplied for the firm for the government's National Minerals Policy.

The firm's annual average expenditures stands P962.2 million, Benguet documents showed.

Boldstops Bolidt, Philex vice president and environment manager, placed her company's investments at P6.9 billion since 1958.

Philex' 2003 annual report notes that the firm was taxed P144 million, which it netted P59 million in export's.

Marcopper mine, also in Benguet, is now in fourth class ranking despite the presence of the 66-year old Lepanto Consolidated Mining Co. (LCMC), which has contributed P3.387 billion in taxes since 1947, based on corporate tax records.

But taxes have paid directly to host towns, Romualdez said the industry's public image could have been better.

This "love-hate relationship" now dampens the future of the older Philippine mines.

Future relationship

Tuba Councilor Wil Carantes said most town officials envision to block Philex's exploration and expansion program in their town until it pays a P3 million environmental fine.

Philex is winding up its Benguet operations.

LCMC is also encountering difficulties in expanding its Bonanza property due to the complaints from Mankayan villagers.

"There can be no debate about the mines' historical role as building most of the local towns in Benguet, said Romualdez.

He said Benguet Corp. helped finance the construction of schools in the early 1900s when American colonizers began introducing English, Science and Mathematics in the indigenous Filipinos in the Cordilleras.

"But the mines were affected by the system. When the government decided to absorb all of the taxes in the 1970s, we started to lose our standing in parts of the community where government's presence was not being felt," he said.

The country's richest mines is expected by increasing their contributions to local projects.

Social investments

The Mines and Geosciences Bureau pegged the overall social investments of Benguet, Philex and LCMC at P88.77 billion.

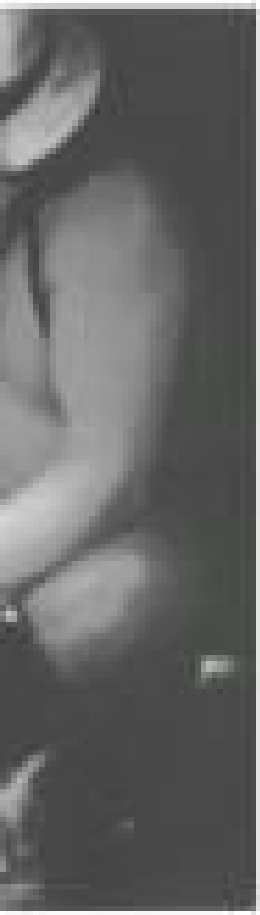
These investments include the latest expenses for mining and assisting "underfed forest areas to protect them against the mining operations.

But to no effect was for Boie once a factory, Romualdez said.

A mining official from one host firm pointed out that they spent a third of their investments building roads and bridges for a local government that refused to part with its power.

Romualdez admitted that the Amer-

LOCAL government units are turning to mining projects



Europeans urge opening of Naia 3

By Rachel W. Dominguez

THE $617-MILLION Ninoy Aquino International Airport Terminal 3 can start operations within six months, that is, if government will allow it, according to the European Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines.

ECCP executive vice president Henry J. Schumacher said in an interview that it would take three months to prepare the facility and another three months to train people to operate it.

Schumacher said proper turnover Takenaka Corp. of Japan had period to businessmen and airline executives in the past few weeks to tour the facility and see for themselves that it was ready to open.

Schumacher said that with the decision to open Terminal 3, the need for Terminal 2 was obvious.

Schumacher, a German, said most companies from his country that are already doing business here have plans of expansion due to growing numbers.

Some of these firms are engaged in electronics, chemicals, garments, health care and industrial services.

He said a legal resolution of the Terminal 3 issue would be a positive signal to European firms that investing in the Philippines would be a good step to take.

The Naia 3 Terminal 3 has been the subject of litigation since the Supreme Court ruled in May 2003 that all the contracts related to the Naia project were void. The highest tribunal said the contracts were against public policy and violative of the Build-Operate-Transfer law.

The high court also decided that the government should take over the project.

Because of this, Fraport AG—the German airport operators contracted for the Terminal 3 concession—reportedly wrote off some $112 million it invested in the project.

Also, Fraport had sought arbitration with the International Center for Settlement of Investment Disputes. The company had accused the government of various "unlawful acts," including its failure to pay compensation for the expropriation of the airport terminal.

"If the Philippine government decides that the (Terminal 3 issue) issue must be solved legally ... then it would have to appoint a political negotiator to help find a solution," Schumacher said. "Surely there are solutions."

Oil firms scramble for FCDUs to meet rising import bills

By Doris C. Dumlao

OIL COMPANIES scrambled for more foreign currency deposit unit (FCDU) loans in the second quarter of this year to serve rising import bills amid skyrocketing global crude prices.

But in shuffling of the FCDU loans, the oil firms, who opened shortly to panic, bankrupted their others to prevent foreign exchange (ex) undercutting the need for them to hedge, analysts said.

Oil companies had obtained $511 million from Philippine banks' FCDU systems in the second quarter of the year, more than double the first quarter outbreak of $245 million, the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas reported yesterday.

The report noted that the investments made all companies the biggest beneficiaries of bank FCDU loan releases in the second quarter, accounting for 43 percent of total disbursements.

The doubling of FCDU loan availments by oil firms during the period came with the surge in the country's oil import bill due to rising oil prices in the world markets.

A foreign exchange trader estimated that the resulting dollar requirement for oil importation may now about $400 million from only $200 million a year ago.

As global oil prices hogged the $60 per barrel level, analysts are worried about the dire consequences on Asian economies that do not have large domestic oil supplies but whose industries are heavy energy users.

"Their import bill is rising and the peso is depreciating, so I would think these oil companies are hedging," said Asian del Castillo, managing director and head manager of First Grade Holdings.

Del Castillo said hedging against volatility in crude prices could be done either through cross-financial instruments or with the way they purchase the crude oil, as the companies could invest in forward contracts with oil shore suppliers to peg the price of their future purchases.

To facilitate hedging against foreign exchange risk, the BSP has an existing currency risk protection program (CRPP) limiting a commercial bank's forward contract between itself and the commercial bank with the foreign exchange obligations of bank clients to the custody of transactions. The facility aims to allow the pressure on the spot market created by market players wanting to buy/sell their future foreign currency requirements and by borrowers such as oil firms wanting to cover foreign currency obligations.

Meanwhile, the BSP report noted that total FCDU loans release as measured to $1.23 billion during the April-June period, almost twice the $667 million disbursements in the first quarter.

"About 17 percent of these disbursements came from local commercial banks and the balance from foreign banks in other subsidiaries operating in the country," the BSP said.

This brought the total outstanding FCDU loans granted by commercial banks and thrift banks in the country to $4.8 billion as of end-June, up by $720 million or 3 percent from the first quarter, but down by 3 percent from a year ago.

Residents borrowers continued to account for 58 percent of the outstanding FCDU loan portfolio, while public utility firms and non-utility service exports each having a 21 percent share.

Private borrowers continue to account for almost two-thirds of the outstanding credits.

In terms of maturity, medium and long-term loans (MLT)—or those with payment terms of one year and above—comprised 71 percent of total. MLT credits comprised 51 percent and 58 percent of the total private and public sector credits, respectively.

Unionbank raises $125M through bond float

THE UNIONBANK group's banking arm Union Bank of the Philippines raised $125 million from its three-year global bond offering.

This was the first time the bank tapped the offshore capital market since the 1997 currency turmoil.

In a press briefing yesterday, Unionbank president Victor Valdepeñas said the bid was much higher than the target size, but the bank decided to cap the issuance at $125 million.

"That week, the ROP (Republic of the Philippines) also went to the market with a $1 billion offering," Valdepeñas said.

Unionbank's bonds were priced at 99.669 percent or 445 basis points over the comparative US Treasury bill with a 7.25 percent coupon rate. Credit Suisse First Boston and ING Investment Bank acted as joint arranger and bookrunner for the issuance.

Valdepeñas said the proceeds from the offering were made available to the bank on Friday.

The proceeds shall be used to upgrade the bank's IT (information technology) infrastructure and loan to lending through credit cards as well as to small and medium enterprises, the bank chief said.

Valdepeñas said Unionbank planned to roll out a countrywide ATM (automated teller machine) network to provide banking facilities for specific customers. He expected the bank to spend P100 million each year over the next five years for the IT project.

Also, bank officials are planning to expand their credit card business, which now has a customer base of 140,000, Valdepeñas said.

"Our credit card base grew by 6,000 to 7,000 a month," he said. "Three years ago, our subscribers were less than 30,000."

Valdepeñas said the bank also planned to grow its SME lending portfolio to P1 billion this year.

The bank has as its deposit P750 million of its portfolio to the sector.

Aside from the Philippine government, Unionbank was the first Philippine entity that entered the global bond market after Malaysia announced that its country was in the midst of a flood exit.

Most national credit rating firm Moody's Investors Service assigned a (Ba2 rating to the bank's senior unsecured debt issue. This rating indicates substantial credit risk, particularly as a result of adverse economic change over time. But financial flexibility still available to allow financial commitments to be met.

Established in 1962 as a result of a merger between Union Savings and Mortgage Bank, and Business Development Corp., Union Bank is currently the 10th largest indigenous bank in the Philippines.

The bank registered consolidated assets of P70.7 billion ($1.4 billion) as of June 30, 2005.

Doris C. Dumlao

BUSINESS

CAP still barred from selling education plans

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

THE SECURITIES and Exchange Commission has not renewed the license of pre-need giant College Assurance Plan Philippines Inc. to sell education plans.

The denial CAP's submission to the SEC of a memorandum of agreement with a local investor, which has committed to invest in the embattled pre-need firm.

SEC chair Fe Barin said the commission has not acted on CAP's pending application to extend the license as the company had yet to comply with other SEC requirements.

CAP's dealer license expired last Sept. 30.

The SEC under former chair Lilia Bautista required CAP to submit to the SEC proof of its subscription agreement with an investor.

Green Circle and Greenspace Property Corp., firms linked to businessman Isidro Montes Bunao, have come forward and committed to invest in CAP by purchasing preferred shares.

Bunao is a close friend of the Ecleo family. The family also owns a majority stake in CAP.

In exchange for these shares, Green Areas would transfer pieces of property to CAP.

The transfer of assets was expected to increase CAP's asset base and address fears that liabilities of the pre-need firm.

Sources said the properties' assets were valued at between P3 billion and P6 billion. The preferred shares were supposed to carry an option to be converted into common shares or voting shares after a certain period, based on the initial agreement between CAP and the investor.

Company sources also said CAP had completed an agreement with an investment house in Hong Kong with global connections that would allow CAP to borrow $125 million. Sources have declined to identify the investor.

Barin, however, assured the public that CAP has not closed down and would continue to service its obligations.

SEC has not specified a deadline as to when CAP should complete the requirements for the renewal of its license.

Apart from extending its dealer's license, CAP also asked the SEC to allow it to sell new education plans worth P1 billion.

In the first half, CAP recorded a net loss of P1.68 billion, 336 percent more than the net loss of P386 million during the same period last year.

CAP had recently paid penalties to the SEC for exceeding the P5-billion limit of securities it was earlier allowed to sell.

The company exceeded the limit by P66 million in August.

Cyber City invests P60M in Mindanao

By Rocnel N. Dumlao

AMERICAN firm Cyber City Enterprises Ltd. is investing an additional P60 million to expand the country's first call center in Mindanao.

According to the Department of Trade and Industry, the project would add 600 seats to Cyber City's operations.

This would put the firm a step closer to meeting its objective of doubling its 2,500-strong corps of agents by the end of the year.

Cyber City, based in New Jersey and California, has a contact center base in the Clark Special Economic Zone.

"Customer center is an industry where the Philippines clearly has an edge," Trade Secretary Cesar V. Purisima said.

"It is a sector that continues to grow as a result of concerted efforts of the government and the private sector to bring in investments and generate employment," he added.

He said Clark Freeport has been growing at a fast clip over the past four years.

Estimates showed that by the end of 2004, there would be 40,000 seats and over 60,000 employees.

Revenues from local call centers were projected to reach as high as P800 million this year.

There are at least 60 companies engaged in contact centers and outsourcing services in the country.

Most of these are affiliates or subsidiaries of US-based firms catering to top Fortune 500 corporations.

Cyber City offers services ranging from residential inbound calls to Web-enabled platforms, including 24-hour help desk support, tech support e-mail, live chat and browsing assistance.

To maintain a steady supply of highly-skilled workers, Cyber City has entered into partnerships with various colleges and universities through its Cyber City International Schools-accredited Foundation Inc.

Under the arrangements, the schools will offer in their curricula elective or short courses that would equip students with the skills to make a career out of customer relations service and outsourcing.

Through this scheme, the company has increased the acceptance rate of qualified job applicants from a low of 3.5 percent to a high of 20-30 percent.

Question of the Week

Are you in favor of giving amnesty to the Oakwood mutineers! Why or why not!

Text your answer to 2307 (Globe) or 383 (Smart). (Maximum of 150 characters)

Key in: inquirer news amnesty<message>

Text your answers to 2307 (Globe) or 383 (Smart). (Maximum of 150 characters)

Text charges apply. See page A2 for details.

Text your answer to 2307 (Globe) or 383 (Smart). (Maximum of 150 characters)

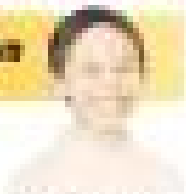
SATURDAY, OCTOBER 2, 2004

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

SATURDAY Inquirer

Wind Talker

Man about town



Chuck Dy

Dear Man about Town,

My problem is really embarrassing. I think I suffer from flatulence. I haven't consulted with a doctor yet, but I'm pretty sure my condition is not what you'd consider normal. I know everybody passes gas once in awhile, but how often is "normal?" In my case, it happens at least a dozen times a day. It's really unexplained and unpredictable. Just when each meal I was sharing this secret with my girlfriend's mom (in an unsuccessful attempt to impress her), I farted during a lull in the conversation. Another time, I was in the middle of a business presentation at work! Despite usually wearing loose clothes, I'm still very self-conscious about it. Is there anything I can do to control it? Or am I just destined to be a social outcast? Please help me.

Gassy Man

Dear Gassy,

I'll admit, I'm not a doctor, but I know that they do have one!

I'll THINK (check) you're responsible enough to consult a reputable physician before—as I learn from one of the honorable lawyer clubs would tend a dissembling dimension to their whole press kind campaign, anyhow). But now, I've

Skin Success
Does Not
Happen Overnight

But it
can happen...
in 14 Days!

...Dark circles around the eye disappear by 40% in just 7 days...
...Enjoy complete overnight...
...Acne facial scars by 18% in just 14 days...
...Natural skin tones in just 14 days...
...Erase freckles by 28% in 14 days, 80% in 28 days...
...Skin pigmentation reduced by 18% in 14 days, 68% in 28 days...
...Wrinkles reduced by 28% in 14 days...
...Introducing your new business card... YOUR OWN!

No Promises... Just Results!

Nora's Hotline 533-2115

nora dela rosa

YES, they all know.

Wind Talker

Pretty gags P3

resists a social faux pas. Which is really quite surprising, given that this is a totally normal (totally gross) fact. Everybody farts—even your girlfriend, her parents, your work colleagues at work and, yes, even your parish priest. The significant variables in your situation appear to be quantity and controllability.

Flatulence is the name of having excessive stomach or intestinal gas, resulting in a bloated feeling, as well as increased belching and passing of gas from the rectum. Most people produce from one to three pints and pass gas as often as 14 times a day. I know some my readers are thinking their heads in protest, but this is a medical fact . . . I mean fact. Some people even do as up to 25 times a day! That's enough rhetoric cutting to *Real Talk*. Remember: it is possible to expel flatus (technical term for fart fancy) without being aware of it. A dozen times a day? Totally you're not even in the big leagues yet. Write me back when the flatus-count dying up.

Pints, possibilities

Excess gas in the digestive tract (which consists of your esophagus, stomach, small and large intestines) is the result of two processes: increased intake of gas, for example, from air you swallow; or increased production of gas as certain undigested foods are broken down by bacteria normally found in your colon.

Aerophagia, or swallowed air, is the result of a variety of habits. If you swallow food improperly, gulp beer too fast, chew gum, overdose on tobacco products or carbonated drinks, inhale bullets from party ball-guns, or hyperventilate during sex, you tend to ingest more air than your body needs. Some of this captured gas is released through the ministry of belching (which, eventually, also causes flatulence), but the rest is left to find a way out through fundamental Hell. No Lemur. No. 3 is, digest everything or a re-heard piece.

And then there's the food you eat. Your body does not digest or absorb some forms of carbohydrates because of a shortage or absence of certain enzymes in your small intestines. This undigested food then passes from the small intestine into the large intestines where normal, harmless bacteria break down the food, producing hydrogen, carbon dioxide and, to about a third of all people, methane (the stuff that ignites). Eventually these gases exit through the rectum, where they develop powerful and potentially at-sonic fodder.

Once again, carbohydrates are the bad guys. Some (Dr. Atkins wasn't paranoid enough to this food group; note flatulence breaks the silence and points an accusing finger at carbs as well. Peas, soybeans, cauliflower, cabbage, broccoli, asparagus, corn, wheat, beans, red wines, onions, artichokes, and fibrous foods are all accessory to the crime. Even most fruits containing fructose (a sugar found in apples, pears and prunes) are guilty. Did I forget to mention bread? There's a cranky dairy intolerance (affecting the musical forms like it was THEA Funfest of the 80ords (the food version gives many farters non-complete). Lemon No. 2: balance your diet.

There's a host of other possible causes of flatulence such as poor dietary fiber, parasites, lactose deficiency, malabsorption syndromes, intestinal obstruction (really), inflammatory bowel disease (really), poor thyroid function, narcotic abuse, and plain old tough luck, but the first two are the most common reasons people suffer for their fun. If you start passing gas excessively (we're talking more than 25 times a day), have accompanying pains, nausea, fevers, vomiting, bleeding, or fainting ghosts shoot out of your ass demanding vengeance from the Spanish colonialists, then you should see a physician. Or a priest.

I'm not sure I can help you, though, on the matter of controlling the timing. Logically, it should be easier if you are able to regulate your gas production. In a case of life-imitating-fart, think of it as modulating exhaust warheads: the less plutonium you amass, the more effectively you can monitor each weapon of gas detonation, and the more accurately you can dispatch a controlled downwinder. Republicans last a lot.

Bombs away!

And if one does happen to accidentally explode, well, what can you do? Damage control depends on the audience and olfactory—sound and fury—aspects, as well as the circumstances of your immediate environment. The most uncomfortable characteristic of flatulence is total controllability. It is perfectly within the province of your audience—during dinner and lovemaking, at the movies, from of the Nation addresses, weddings and funerals—that you have no control over the gas emissions (notable loud), like a bus. Rhino-case is when it's just you and another person you have just met, or highly respect, within a confined area (outside attack), maybe a blind date in the car, or the hope in a confessional booth. You can't even lie.

Other wise, treat this fact as an embarrassment but trivial worry, worthy of little else but comic relief. One does not make the toast, chokes do. While excessive flatulence is cause for some embarrassment, it occurs nowhere near the realm of spousal abuse or financial fraud. And it can be solved. Take your time brushing. Watch what you eat. Burn out as much as you can before leaving the house. Refrain to be ruled by gas, my friend, for we are masters of our own digestive destinies and captains of our ship. We are the directors, writers and principal actors of this play called Breakfast. Flatulence has had a small bit.

(email author at lobotomizemeplease@aol.com)

'When did reality become TV? Whatever happened to sitcoms, game shows? And when did Ozzy become an actor? Please make this stop, stop, stop!'
–Bowling for Soup, '1985'

M.S.A trains you to excel!!!
Grade School
English • Reading • Science
Mathematics • Mental Math Training
High School
Algebra • Geometry
Trigonometry • General Science
Biology • Chemistry • Physics • English
College
English • College Algebra
Trigonometry • Analytic Geometry
Calculus • Chemistry
M.S.A Review Programs
High School Entrance Tests
Philippine Science H.S.
College Entrance Tests
SAT GMAT GRE HAAT
Law Aptitude Exam
Professional Levels
Civil Service Exam: CSEE, CSSO
IELTS, TSE, TOEFL, TWE
Quezon City
M.S.A
Makati City
Alabang
Cainta
Antipolo
Cebu City

Dot common

'When did reality become TV? Whatever happened to sitcoms, game shows? And when did Ozzy become an actor? Please make this stop, stop, stop.' –**Bowling for Soup, '1985'**

FROM being a means for computers to share scientific and ancillary info in the '90s on a one-stop shop for vintage Beatles and records-find advice in the '00s, the Internet has definitely taken the global even-stop toward various peaks and pitfalls. It has, in fact, become a modern-day French Revolution, one that has made life more democratic for some but even more nerve-racking for others. Like all forms of digital technology that came before it, the Internet has changed the marketplace forever by rapidly increasing the power and magnitude of ordinary schmoes to

Age against the machine

Gino de la Paz

create products and services—crappy or otherwise—and sell them online. Zzzzzz. Okay, for all of you with ADHD, this is the GIST: Status symbol: the Internet has produced a more accessible and commercial way of life for the masses. Or, following the historical slant of this argument, More Accessible Status or long fact.

In the realm of popular entertainment, reality television was a likely offshoot—a fast, cool byproduct, if you will—of the so-called Internet revolution. In an interview with CNN's Gretchen Udoy in 2000, Columbia Uni. society business professor David Schmitt said, "What is happening is that a business device that has always been there is now put to the marketplace and is becoming commercialized. Customers are enjoying being part of that commercial experience on a global basis." Translation: From Greenland to Ghana, everyone is getting hip to TV subscription!

Parents used to simply want to be part of the lives of a few people in a house on TV and online. To illustrate this, TV land had only four reality shows in the summer of 2000. Now, it seems, the general public doesn't mind selling its soul; the number of reality series has ballooned to more than 40 in the United States alone. With shows ranging from "Survivor" to "Big Brother," the quest for fame and a small fortune has turned a majority of the world's solid unarmored citizens into money-hungry mammals in as little as four years. If reality television is the first gasp for contemporary community living, has the price of fame reached an all-time low? Given that, is anonymity now more desirable than celebrity?

Lack of convolusionship

The Internet has the ability to empower any random individual and it has bequeathed that same ram-de-spair to its red-square, reality television. In the few times that I will care to quote her, Anna Wintour observes, "Reality television has made it possible for practically anyone to capture mass attention overnight."

The first drawback to this new kind of people power is the triumph of form over substance. Here's a preview: "Hey you. Yes, you! Look at me. I'm so hot. I can look like a rock star! Or a VJ! Or a model! Oh, did I mention I'll eat donkey poo, catch guinea fowl or sell my left kidney...anything... just to be a celebrity!" Yup. That's exactly what we're looking at right now—a whole generation of great looking, fast-talking, media-savvy kids who look like they could be rock stars, VJs or models, but are sadly none of the above. Talk about posing.

What's so wrong with media-made posturing themselves off as diamond notwithstanding? "It's about presentation and everyone wants to be models," gripes Eudosia Cuizondos (director: Fiesta Sightseeing), the woman responsible for Sigrid Bea and Marilyn Mina.

Because we gotta!

WHERE'S YOUR HEAD AT? Hed Kandi's DJ Andy Norman

FHM Girl claim a free an entertaining se this kind than Hed Kandi has accom plished in the past half decade. A band ful might sensibly be pushing it... in such a brief period, DJ and A&R Man Math Jenki unveiled this lifestyle concept to unrelieved heights by incorporating a record label, a to dio show, mini-industrial club nights and a dis tinct graphic style all under the single groovy banner "Hed Kandi." Presently the brand en joys beta-hitherto status among musicians, DJs and clubbers from all over the planet. And it a relentless in its continuous pursuit to grow even more so providing the audience with quality sounds.

Speaking of Hed Kandi's "international club nights," a gig here in Manila would definitely fall into that category, in part of the annual BIG FIRE tradition of organizing superstar club music parties. Hed Kandi returns to the scenery with acclaimed DJ Andy Norman. This talented man appears regularly for Hed Kandi at the likes of Pacha, London, and ibiza, since. Ibiza, headlining Kandi's HP tent at Godskitchen Global Gathering Gatecrasher One and playing at the Ultra Ball in Miami, to name a few.

Make way for this highly anticipated p e r f o r m a n c e. Why? Because we gotta!

Lemon-aide

Giselle Segovia

Saturday, October 2

The spotlight is turned on SBC Tsui tonight as Hed Kandi's DJ Andy Normanstorms onto the deck with his mixing skills. Get to upstairs IQ bar; presidential counselors if you still don't have a token. As usual, special perks have been lined up for the... Mmm... I'm thinking it might ultimately be cheaper if I switch to becoming altogether! Hmmm...

Sunday, October 3

Hurry up or you might miss the last day for the second-to-old year offering of Indie Philippines, "HP Love Global." The installation will include "Mac and Bobby" by young artists director Mike Laguinsin, which won at the 9th Cinemanila International de Cinema de Paris, France, in 2003; "Charleston Pusher" by Mike Sinco; Jocelyn Jalbuena's "Gospel," Jhoffrey "Liz Pich Mich d'Amore," Alvin Tolentino's "Field 1," and Augustus Damian III's "Evanescence," this one on in Philippine premiere. Show schedules are 10 a.m., 2 p.m. and 8 p.m. at the CCP Main Theater. Call 832-1601 or 832-1660 for details.

Monday, October 4

You will notice that this week ahead is all about sociopaced causes. Today it's an ex hibit and auction at the Manila Peninsula Ingredient ballroom for the benefit of Aaron's Kin

LET'S GET METAMORED! Everyone is gaming hip to TV's metamorphosis

Dot common

From page C2

ner's best videos ever. She was talking about music videos but one could also repurpose her line up to sum up the current lack of commonsensibility among the youth today. See, there used to be a time when people who looked like hairbrushes were, in touch, *fashionistas*, who were able to back it all up with the required experience, information and designer wardrobes. These days, though, you'd be hard-pressed to find the vocal chair despite the wave of authenticity that everyone seems to be riding on. You have teen-dressed people who wear Mangos'l, VJs with poor-to-average taste in music and, worse of all, attractive teens and twens, cyanosurfings who don't sound anything like they look. It's tough.

What you 'see'

The best side effect of reality TV's

From page C1

crowned our playing field is that art can no longer set judge a book by its cover. In heaven, there would be a model of reasons why that statement is wrong. But in our upside-down pop-culture universe, it makes perfect sense. "I tread it on the Internet and I saw it on TV, so it must be true," you scream. Why can blame you? With its narrowcast of life's minutiae as their "content" and "must-see" boasted, reality TV is encouraging us to clap at the surface because backstage has been moved to the backseat. In short, the whole shebang is now on display leaving close to nothing for the imagination. (Planet Earth seems to be shouting from the rooftops, "This is you!" or whatever to that effect...not knowing that "what you see is what you get" can also be code for "buy-bust forward." Think about it.) Everyone seems to be on camera every hour, on the point of being defensive about earnestness and honesty. Hell, if you think about it, how "re-

The cheapening of fame

Last and most significant, by pulling mediocre individuals on the primer time pedestal, reality TV has tarnished and perverted the entire concept of fame. "In an age of reality TV and Internet self-exposure, most celebrity is a parasitic downright accord. Richer reasons a rise; notoriety is not," Vogue's Sally Singer writes about the differences between the new crop of catwalk stars and the Old Testament supermodels. I couldn't agree more.

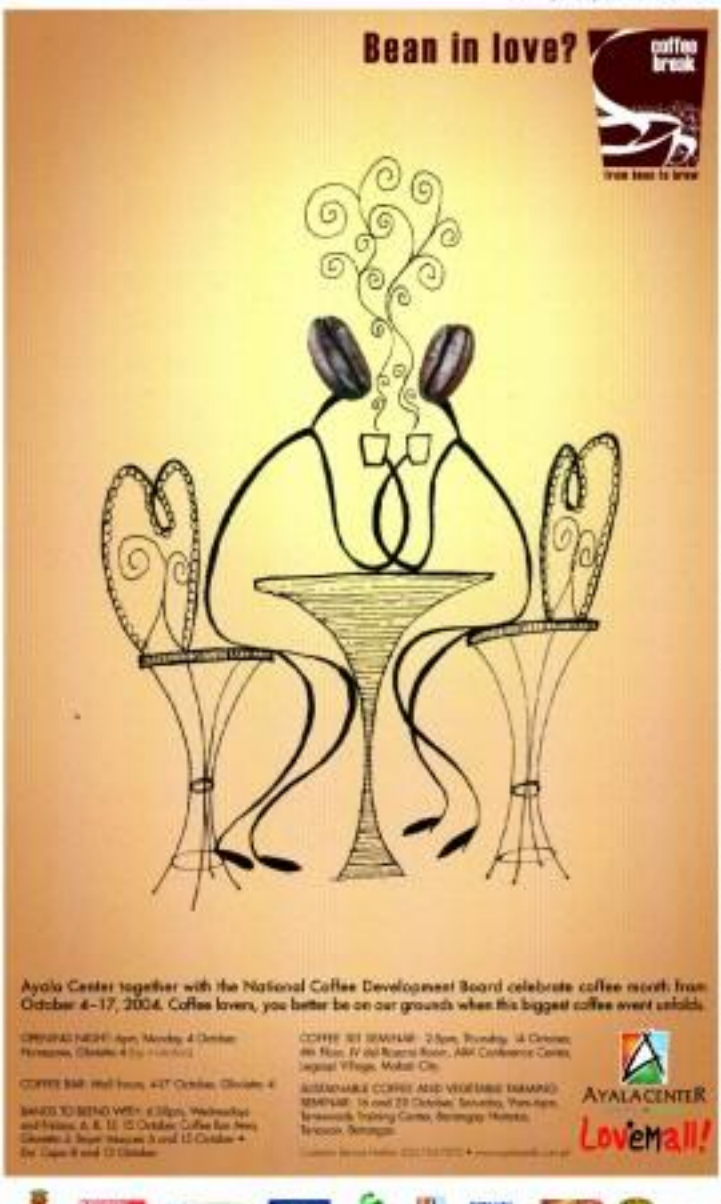
Call me a curmudgeon, anti-populist prick, but I believe in appropriate levels of conspicuousness, even for those "celebrities." Vapid celebrities embedding themselves in sex tape scandals, classy television personalities renouncing the inherited traits of their station, and the like are guilty pleasures that never become fatty of everyday life. Being pleasing myself from a previous attain, that is just as B. Jan. I repeat. B. Jan.

Dot uncommon

As a card-carrying member of the Baby Boomer, I find it hard to imagine life before the Internet. When I manage to do so, all I see are stills from a really bad karaoke video: nothing gracious with baby backpacks, high-waisted models wearing fun and lots of shoulder pads and David Hasselhoff looking oppressively vulgar in a pair of red Speedos. Ah, the primitive past. Thank God for eh-eh-changes, as David Bowie stammered.

Nonetheless, there is a part of me that hankers for the good old days when technology meant crayons to spell. After all, the notion of celebrity and fame drew was less complicated compared to how it is now; fun and fiction were completely polarized and much easier to distinguish. Besides that, the only thing that came close to reality programming back in the day was the evening news and that was meant to inform a viewer; not add to his brainwaves.

By using the you-zip-I-say mentality of the intellectually young, I think it would be logical that the opposite of reality TV and all its trappings will become the next big thing. Learning from our more mild than-wild, fusion! See past, this is what I have to offer: If you don't want to be part of the dot common herd, hang on to your privacy. Contrary to the decades of the 60ies, anonymity is indeed the new popularity.



Because we gotta!

From page C1

Goodbye to Breast Cancer (BCBC) Campaign "Uncovering Life" will feature works of top women artists Jet Arellano Conio, Impy Pilapil, Diana Feodoro-Baras and many others.

Tuesday, October 5

Rolled V-Bar tonight (set again! On its way to becoming the most popular weekend club party, V Bar on Tuesdays is everyone ball, metropole affair (hip-hop music for turn and women who want to shake their booty (and boy do they do just that!)—come and see. Tee-ish is a little early, but if you want to get a table, it wouldn't hurt. Try not to call in sick the next day though.

Wednesday, October 6

You people probably noticed late at the last-but-hallucination of Russell Crowe in "A Beautiful Mind." Joe Paul Bernardo surely caught the attention of Jennifer Connelly. They are together now, sorry Russell). And, with the opening of the romantic flick "After Medio," he is obviously taking notice (duh)—that of Rivers Cuomo, who plays his lead, big body and the producers. Looks like an exhausting-enough endeavor if you want to watch a fight one. In theaters starting today.

Thursday, October 7

If only to appreciate the political, judicial, artistic and industrial craftsmen who have helped mold our country to size wits or smirk, check out the Streamsdown' Aurium. Honors include former presidents Corazon Aquino and Fidel Ramos, artist Anita Magsaysay-Ho, Don Jaime Zobel de Ayala, Educational Testing Service's Florencio Abad, and Chief Justice Hilario Davide. Proceeds will go to the Independent Journalism Fund, which supports the publication Newsbreak. For more inquiries, please call 687-3228 or 687-1024.

Friday, October 8

The very intriguing advertisement of "Lavatina," a play about language, power and sex, is compelling. Sam Gaugaza directs and stars in it opposite the lovely Lara Morgan, whose face is emblazoned on the poster. Opening tonight, 6 p.m., at Stagewerx, 5th level, Silas Shangri-La Mall. Call Ticketworld, 891-9999.

The Word for the Bored

"How are arsenic not like fortress lipstick?"

—Lindsay Lohan

BUSTED!

By Giselle Segovia

AT THE recent first ever MTV Style Awards, the honorees received a susceptible "bust" as the actual trophy symbolizing the recognition bestowed upon them by of course, MTV and Manila's fashion followers. It was a fitting badge for the sparkled tie who not only walked down the red carpet but continued on (after their names were called) to grace the stage. The "disco-luxe" themed event threw brownie points and then some to the purveyors of standout style in fashion, music, movies, television, business, sports, and politics via an extravaganza show directed by what do you know, another fashion maven Holiday Carmona of Saga Events.

The glittering affair, presented by LG Ando, overflowed with a vibrant mix of the most stylish people (hmm, thanks MTV!). Presenters included Iya Mar Roxas, Allen's Maritoni, Ara Colorado, Bamboo, Shiro Hirose, Fitri Quadriani CEO Doyoo Technico-Tampakan, Pinky Sibilli, Marc Nelson, Denise Laurel and Mariel Rodriguez of MTV's Groupie, Brian Kennedy, Enzo Manuzquil, Tim Yap, Mercedes K. Arbid.

Eddie Gil was all over the place but Sugar endorser Jericho Rosales kept him still at the podium. Other presenters were Lolanie of The Little Majesty Show, Joost Uppenrin, Gracee Cruz, Louie Ysmael, Nate Laurel, Zoe Jimenez, Angel Aquino, Celina Lopez, Jon Hall, Rael Rio, Richie Nadal, Niko Iturzaeta, Chechel Jones, Michael Salientes, Eli Buendia, Juan Karlo SR, Jeanne Quintan-Primero, Angel Aquino, G Tongi, PBA Gamebuys Bob Dout, Johnny Abaya, Dino Alindo, Art Tinoloa and Tessa Prieto-Valdes.

Awards were given out in eight people's choice and 12 jury categories. The MTV Style Council—movie/intro executives of top fashion editors, journalists, stylists, designers, photographers, and models assisted by MTV—voted on the jury awards. Special awards were given by G, Studio and Lifestyle Pocket Pinoy.

One of the highlights of the proceedings was the special Heritage Fashion award given to standout trendsetters Tessa Prieto-Valdes and our own superstar, Tim Yap.

The night wouldn't have been branded by MTV without outstanding musical numbers. Rudimentary fingo Pimpee and Bamboo performed their hit single "Nerve" with Chad respectively. The Mahiling Ensemble played a lively instrumental number to provide an ethnic backdrop to Raja Laurel's collection. Orange and Lemons performed their hits on the Dream Dome song "Girls on Film" for Pretty Stamos-Valdes's collection.

For Jojo Lizon's collection, Intercoag, together with The Mahiling Ensemble and opera singer Thea Vivo, did "Fruit Ice." For Ignacio Lopulo's collection, Goth group, The Line (who performed at Saturday's version of Abba's "Dancing Queen," hundreds did the dance "Sweet Child of Mine" and their rocking single "Two Trick Pony" during the revolutionary Assigned of the "four musicians" showcase. The Randy Ortiz collection was presented together with a performance of "Ha," by Jay B and Brian Heighton. The night ended with a stellar performance of "Like a Prayer" by lawrence Heybuk, together with the Musicians Degree.

Garth the disco-less glitz, glamor and some fashion fora pas. Update a few comments big blunders when the television coverage airs on MTV Philippines, Saturday, Oct. 16 at 3 p.m. Watch more of it on the MTV Style Awards Red Carpet Special on Monday, Oct. 11, 7 p.m., with replays on Wednesday, Oct. 13, 8:30 p.m., and Sunday, Oct. 17, 9:30 p.m.

Hmm that we know people are actually paying attention to what we swatches definitely influence to do so too.

Winners' list

People's choice awardees:

Favorite Stylish Leading Lady: Claudine Barretto
Favorite Stylish Leading Man: Aga Muhlach
Favorite Stylish Power Player: Female: Lorna Laquindanum
Favorite Stylish Power Player: Male: Mel Kimura
Most Influential International Artist: Britney Spears
Favorite Stylish Summer Cool: Pinoneers Kevin de los Reyes Mallorca
Favorite MTV Breakout: Richie Almeida
Favorite MTV Rockstyle: Gamboa Madonna

Winners of the jury awards:

Fashion Icon of the Year: Melissa Avelino
Fashion Icon of the Year: Julia Montes
Fashion Icon of the Year: Jessa Zaragoza | Jose de Ayala II
Best Dressed Guy: Tim Yap Ricky Reyes
Fashion Photographer of the Year: Bobbie Aquino
Breakthrough Designer of the Year: Rochelle Ramos
Best Stylish Music Video: "Bibit" by Parokya ni Edgar
Most Fashion Model of the Year: Sergy Navarro
Favorite Fashion Model of the Year: Isabel Rivas
Designer of the Year: Jojo Lizon

Winners of the special awards:

Fashion Fashion Icons: Tessa Prieto-Valdes and Tim Yap
Style to the Fan presented by Lifebuoy: Bea Zamora and Rica Peralejo
Dance Blog presented by the New Content Leader Pocket Pinoy: Tessa Prieto-Valdes